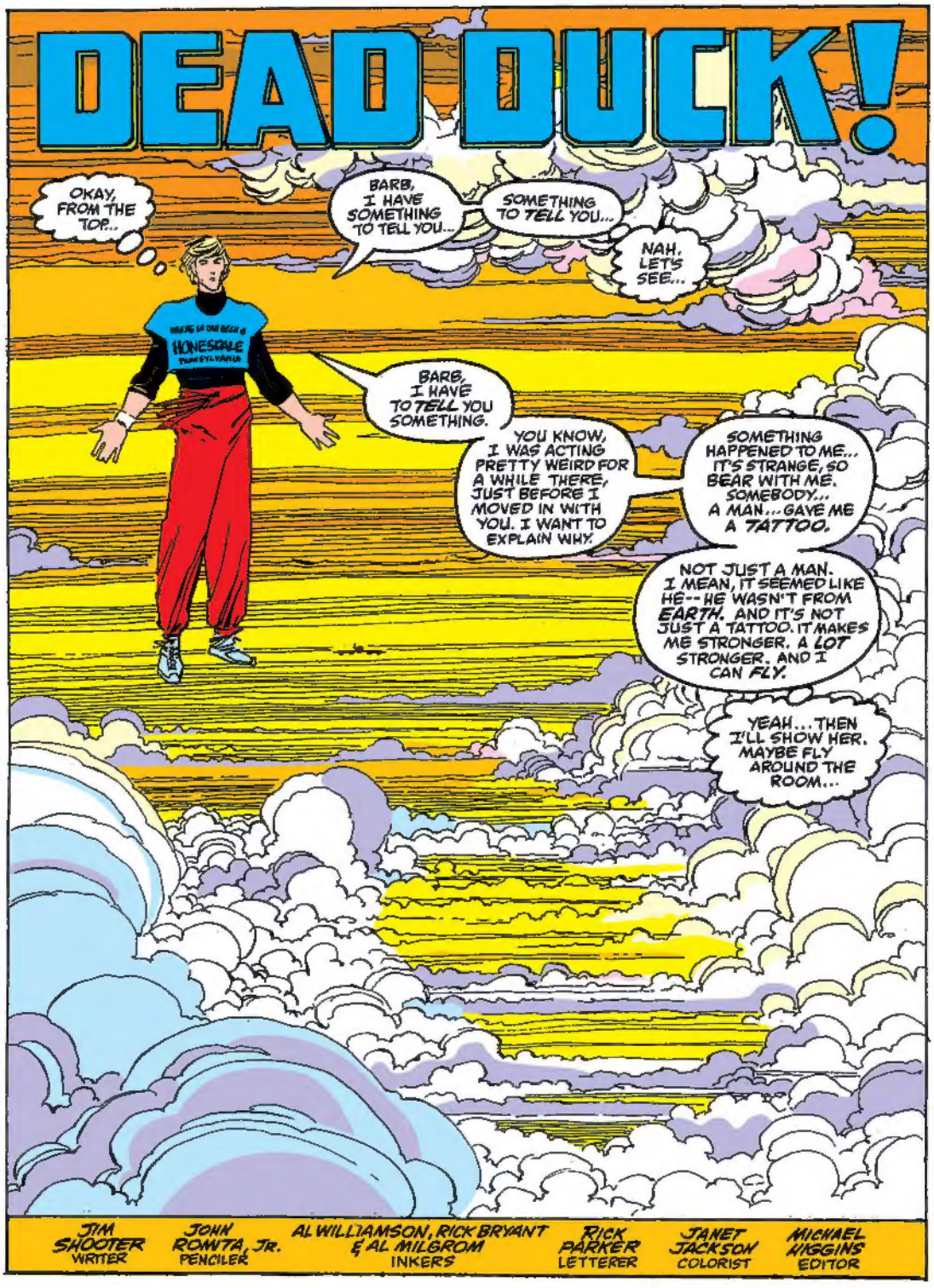
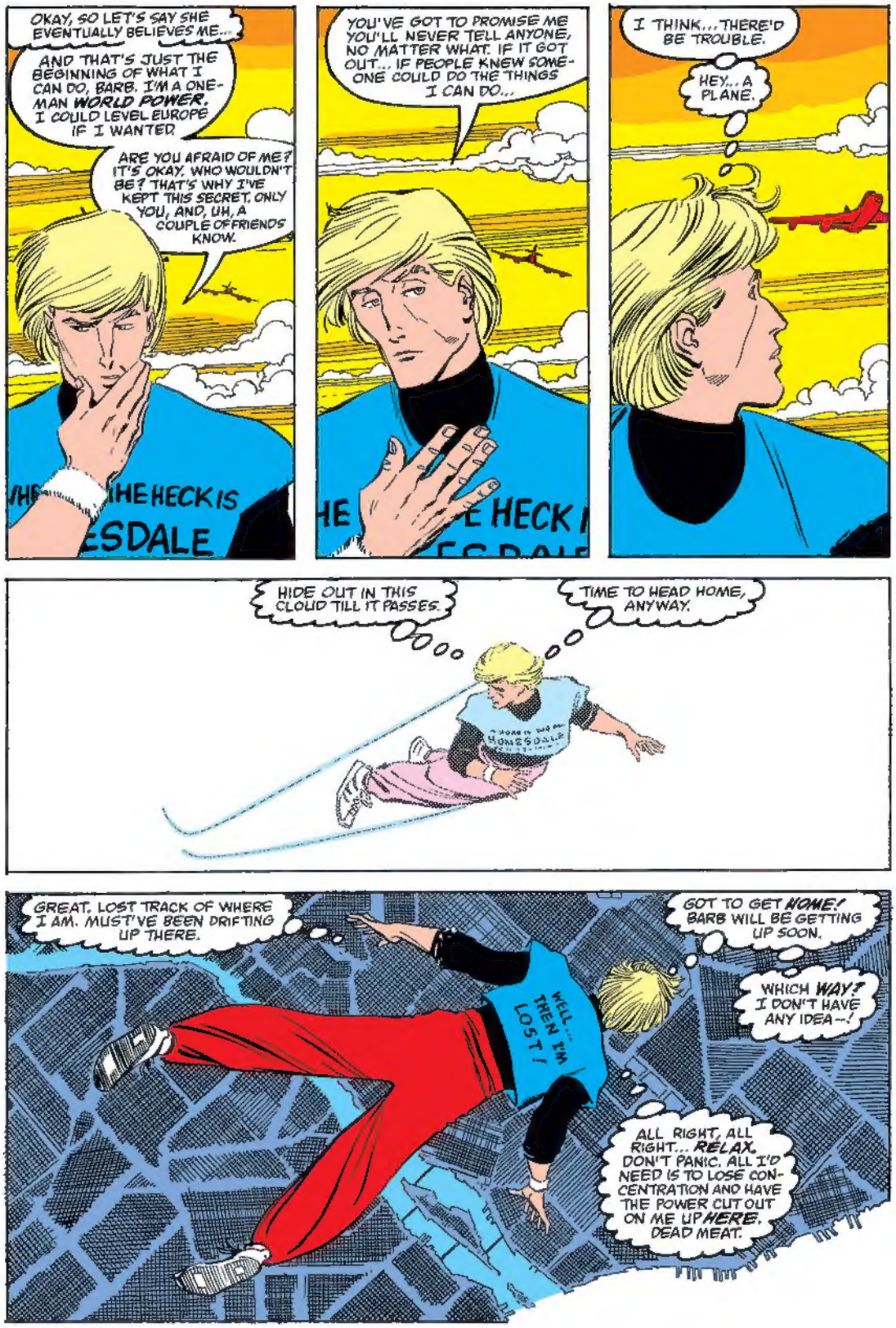
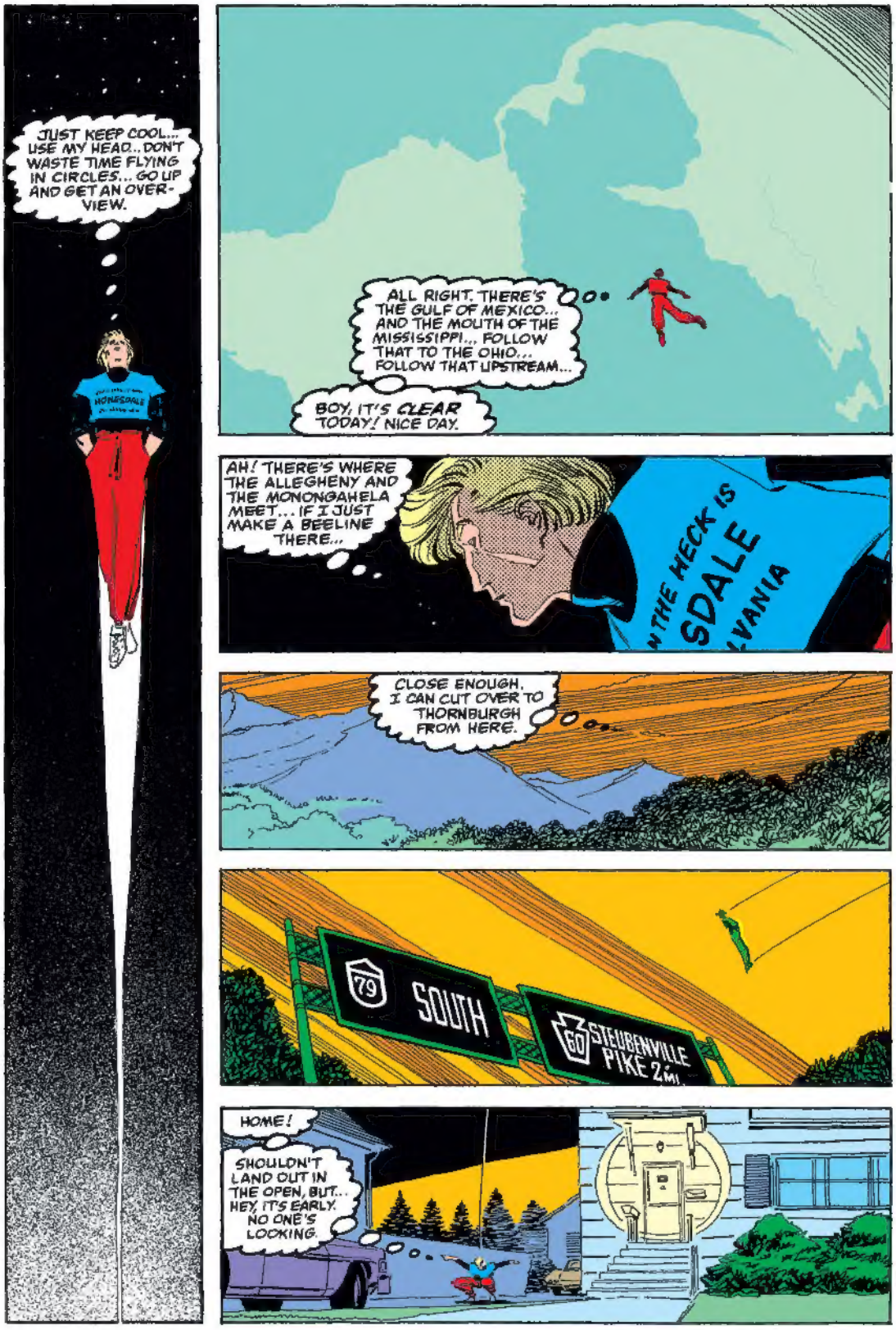
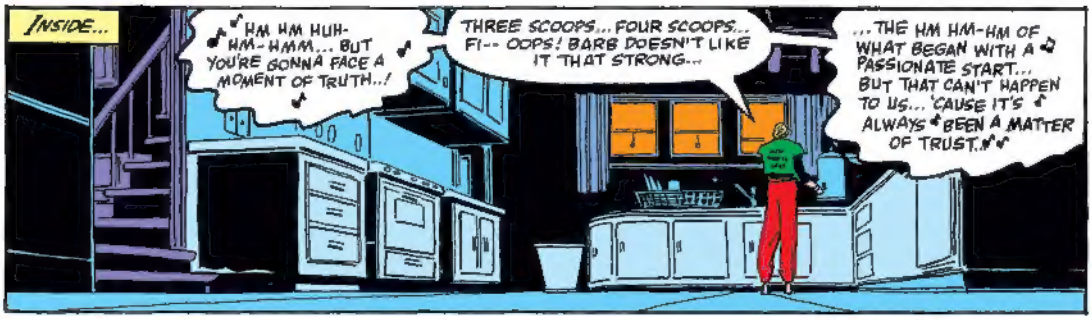
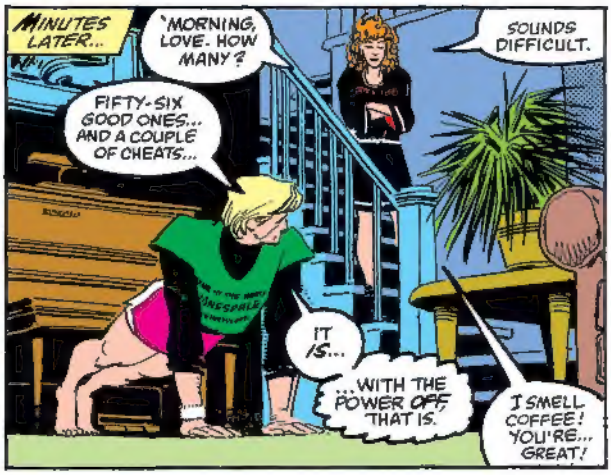
MARVEL®
© 1987 MARVEL COMICS GROUP
75¢ US
95¢ CAN
6 MAR
02140
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
new universe™
STAR BRAND™
SALTARES AND TEXEIRA


DEAD DUCK!
OKAY, FROM THE TOP...
BARB, I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU...
SOMETHING TO TELL YOU...
NAH. LET'S SEE...
HONESDALE
BARB, I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.
YOU KNOW, I WAS ACTING PRETTY WEIRD FOR A WHILE THERE, JUST BEFORE I MOVED IN WITH YOU. I WANT TO EXPLAIN WHY.
SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ME... IT'S STRANGE, SO BEAR WITH ME. SOMEBODY... A MAN... GAVE ME A TATTOO.
NOT JUST A MAN. I MEAN, IT SEEMED LIKE HE-- HE WASN'T FROM EARTH. AND IT'S NOT JUST A TATTOO. IT MAKES ME STRONGER. A LOT STRONGER. AND I CAN FLY.
YEAH... THEN I'LL SHOW HER. MAYBE FLY AROUND THE ROOM...
JIM SHOOTER WRITER
JOHN ROMITA, JR. PENCILER
AL WILLIAMSON, RICK BRYANT & AL MILGROM INKERS
RICK PARKER LETTERER
JANET JACKSON COLORIST
MICHAEL HIGGINS EDITOR

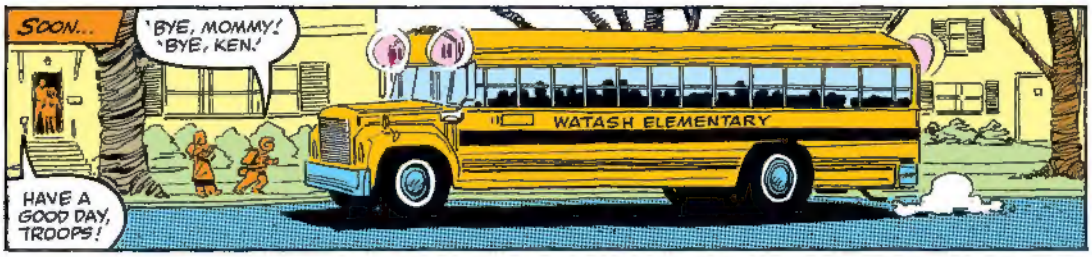

OKAY, SO LET'S SAY SHE EVENTUALLY BELIEVES ME...
AND THAT'S JUST THE BEGINNING OF WHAT I CAN DO, BARB. I'M A ONE-MAN WORLD POWER. I COULD LEVEL EUROPE IF I WANTED.
ARE YOU AFRAID OF ME? IT'S OKAY. WHO WOULDN'T BE? THAT'S WHY I'VE KEPT THIS SECRET. ONLY YOU, AND, UH, A COUPLE OF FRIENDS KNOW.
YOU'VE GOT TO PROMISE ME YOU'LL NEVER TELL ANYONE, NO MATTER WHAT. IF IT GOT OUT... IF PEOPLE KNEW SOMEONE COULD DO THE THINGS I CAN DO...
I THINK... THERE'D BE TROUBLE.
HEY... A PLANE.
HIDE OUT IN THIS CLOUD TILL IT PASSES.
TIME TO HEAD HOME, ANYWAY.
GREAT. LOST TRACK OF WHERE I AM. MUST'VE BEEN DRIFTING UP THERE.
WELL... THEN I'M LOST!
GOT TO GET HOME! BARB WILL BE GETTING UP SOON.
WHICH WAY? I DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA--!
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT... RELAX. DON'T PANIC. ALL I'D NEED IS TO LOSE CONCENTRATION AND HAVE THE POWER CUT OUT ON ME UP HERE. DEAD MEAT.

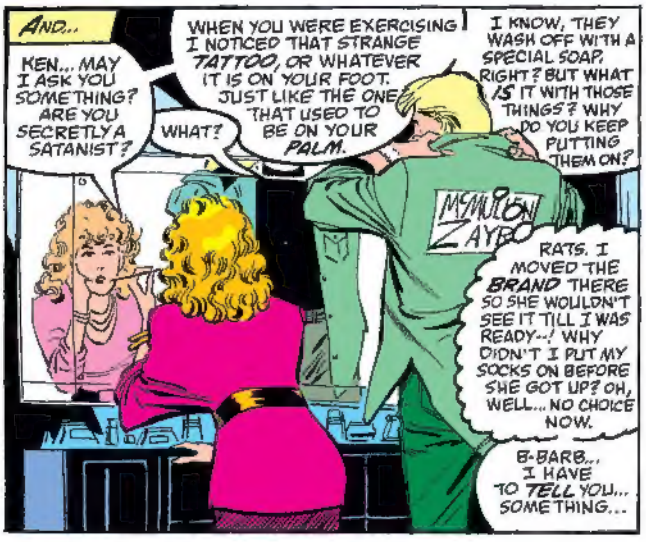

JUST KEEP COOL... USE MY HEAD... DON'T WASTE TIME FLYING IN CIRCLES... GO UP AND GET AN OVER-VIEW.
HONESDALE
ALL RIGHT, THERE'S THE GULF OF MEXICO... AND THE MOUTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI... FOLLOW THAT TO THE OHIO... FOLLOW THAT UPSTREAM...
BOY, IT'S CLEAR TODAY! NICE DAY.
AH! THERE'S WHERE THE ALLEGHENY AND THE MONONGAHELA MEET... IF I JUST MAKE A BEELINE THERE...
N THE HECK IS
SDALE
VANIA
CLOSE ENOUGH. I CAN CUT OVER TO THORNBURGH FROM HERE.
79
SOUTH
60
STEUBENVILLE PIKE 2mi.
HOME!
SHOULDN'T LAND OUT IN THE OPEN, BUT... HEY, IT'S EARLY. NO ONE'S LOOKING.


INSIDE...
♪ HM HM HUH-HM-HMM... BUT YOU'RE GONNA FACE A MOMENT OF TRUTH..! ♪
THREE SCOOPS... FOUR SCOOPS... FI-- OOPS! BARB DOESN'T LIKE IT THAT STRONG...
...THE HM HM-HM OF WHAT BEGAN WITH A PASSIONATE START... BUT THAT CAN'T HAPPEN TO US... 'CAUSE IT'S ♪ ALWAYS BEEN A MATTER OF TRUST. ♪


MINUTES LATER...
'MORNING, LOVE. HOW MANY?
FIFTY-SIX GOOD ONES... AND A COUPLE OF CHEATS...
SOUNDS DIFFICULT.
IT IS...
...WITH THE POWER OFF, THAT IS.
I SMELL COFFEE! YOU'RE... GREAT!

UH-HUH. SO LET'S FOOL AROUND. WHAT DO YOU SAY?
OH, KEN--! WE CAN'T NOW. IT'S ALMOST TIME TO GET THE KIDS READY FOR SCHOOL.

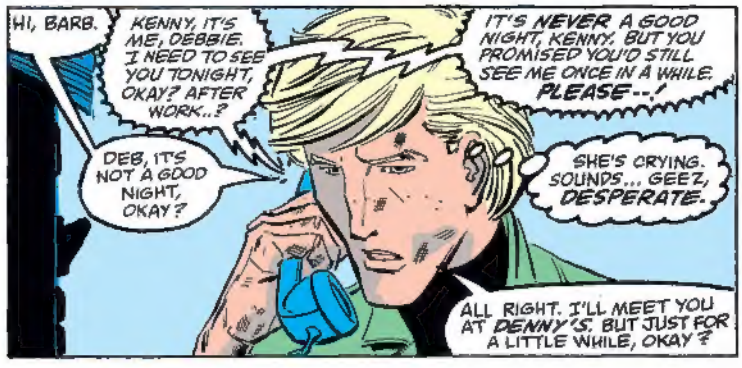

SOON...
'BYE, MOMMY! 'BYE, KEN.'
WATASH ELEMENTARY
HAVE A GOOD DAY, TROOPS!

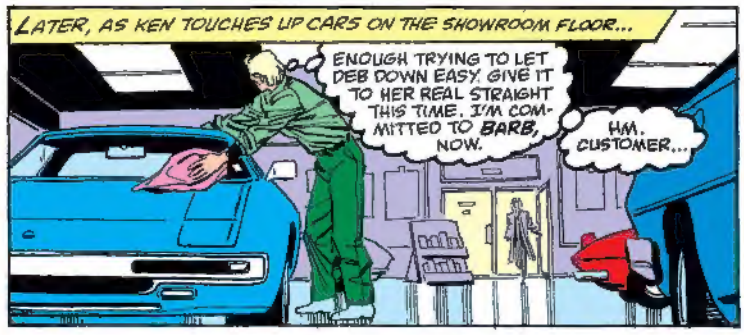

AND...
KEN... MAY I ASK YOU SOMETHING? ARE YOU SECRETLY A SATANIST?
WHAT?
WHEN YOU WERE EXERCISING I NOTICED THAT STRANGE TATTOO, OR WHATEVER IT IS ON YOUR FOOT. JUST LIKE THE ONE THAT USED TO BE ON YOUR PALM.
I KNOW, THEY WASH OFF WITH A SPECIAL SOAP, RIGHT? BUT WHAT IS IT WITH THOSE THINGS? WHY DO YOU KEEP PUTTING THEM ON?
RATS. I MOVED THE BRAND THERE SO SHE WOULDN'T SEE IT TILL I WAS READY--! WHY DIDN'T I PUT MY SOCKS ON BEFORE SHE GOT UP? OH, WELL... NO CHOICE NOW.
B-BARB... I HAVE TO TELL YOU... SOME THING...

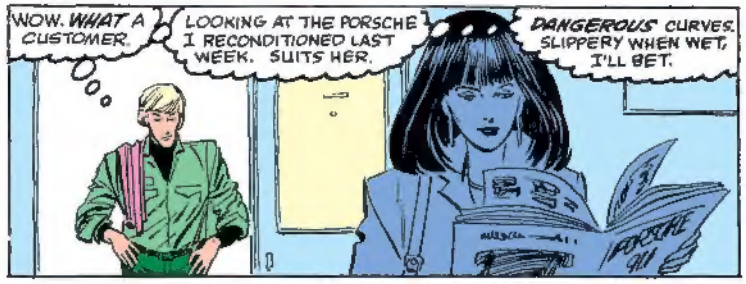
YES?
I, UH... FORGOT ALL ABOUT THAT DUMB FAKE TATTOO ON MY HEEL. I, UH... GOT IT AT A PARTY A WHILE BACK. I'LL, UH... GET IT OFF AT WORK TODAY. LACQUER THINNER OUGHTTA DO IT...

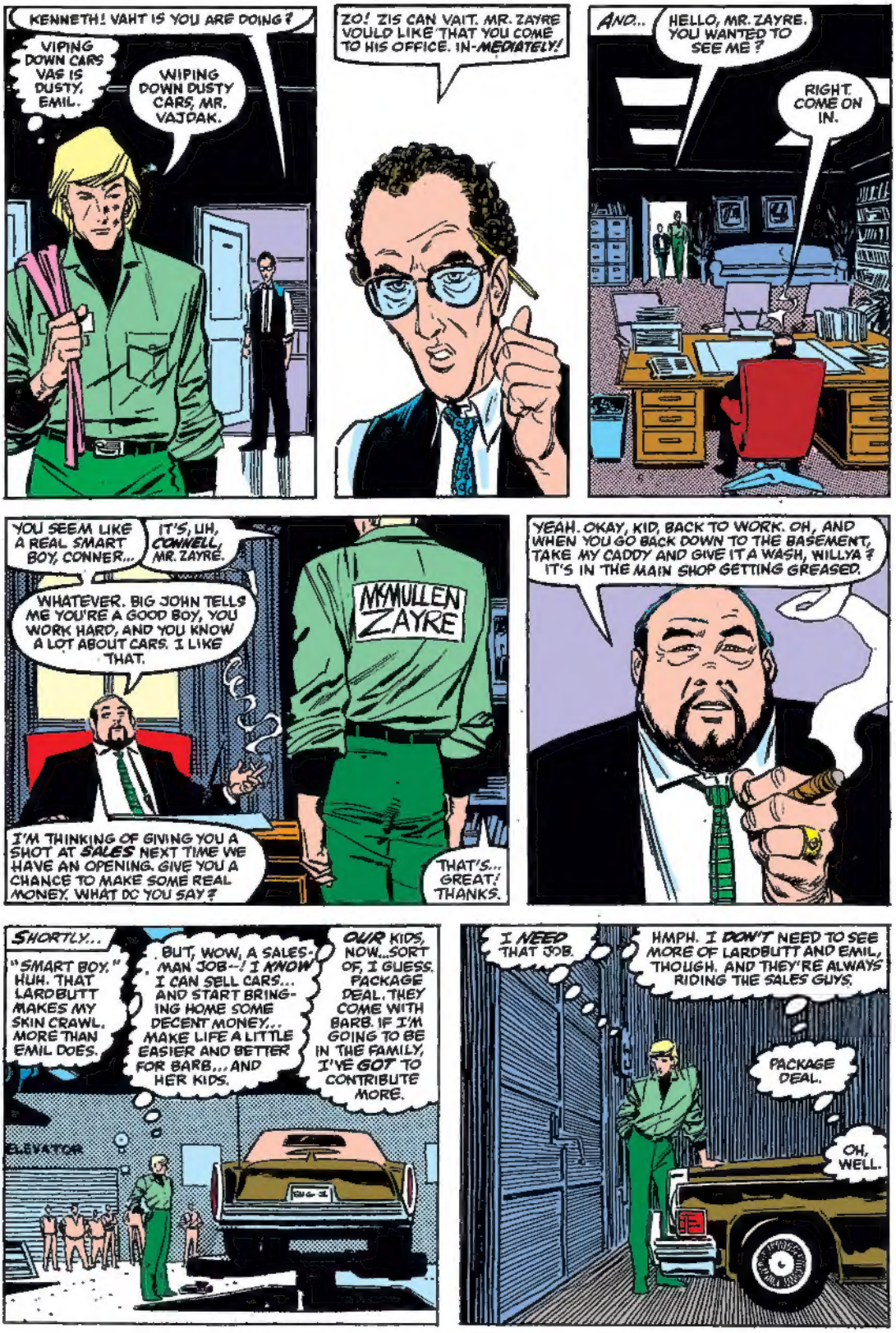
SOON, AT McMULLEN AND ZAYRE VOLKSWAGEN --
McMUL
AND
ZAYRE
VOLKSW

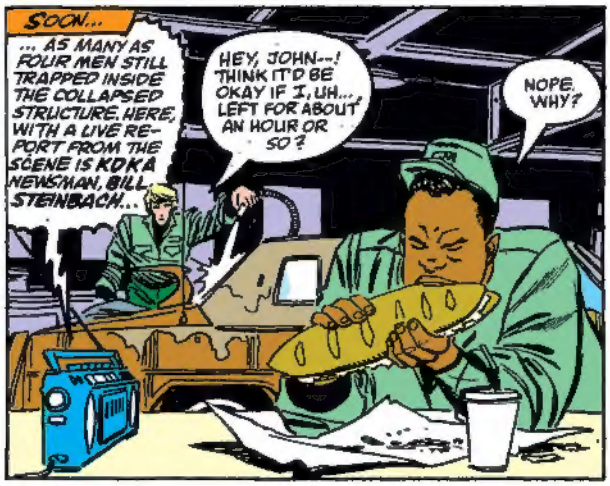
-- IN THE USED CAR RECONDITIONING SHOP...
PHONE FOR YOU, KEN! MAKE IT SHORT. WE GOT WORK TO DO.
OKAY, BIG JOHN. WHO IS IT?
YOUR GIRL-FRIEND.
TONIGHT I HAVE TO TELL HER. CAN'T WIMP OUT AGAIN.


HI, BARB.
KENNY, IT'S ME, DEBBIE. I NEED TO SEE YOU TONIGHT, OKAY? AFTER WORK..?
DEB, IT'S NOT A GOOD NIGHT, OKAY?
IT'S NEVER A GOOD NIGHT, KENNY. BUT YOU PROMISED YOU'D STILL SEE ME ONCE IN A WHILE. PLEASE--!
SHE'S CRYING. SOUNDS... GEEZ, DESPERATE.
ALL RIGHT. I'LL MEET YOU AT DENNY'S. BUT JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE, OKAY?

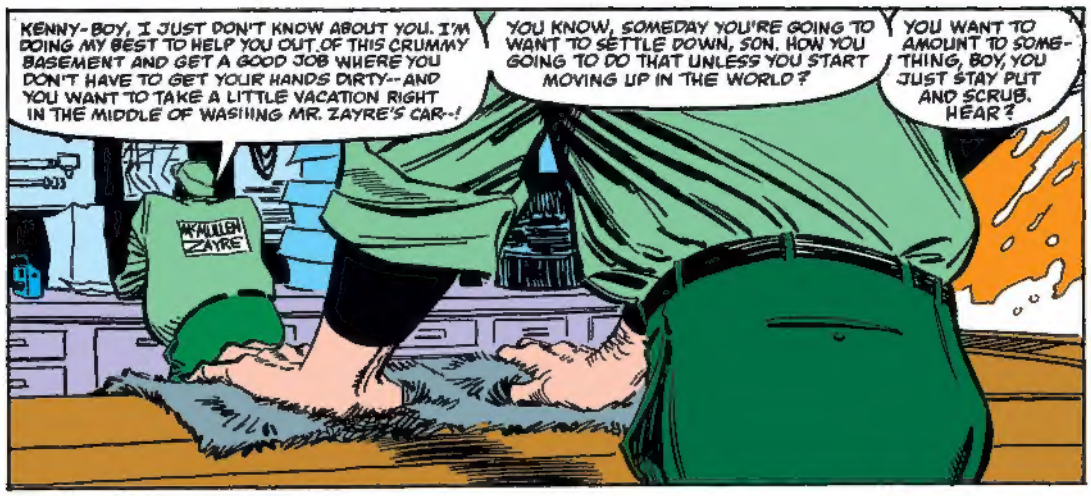

LATER, AS KEN TOUCHES UP CARS ON THE SHOWROOM FLOOR...
ENOUGH TRYING TO LET DEB DOWN EASY. GIVE IT TO HER REAL STRAIGHT THIS TIME. I'M COMMITTED TO BARB, NOW.
HM. CUSTOMER...

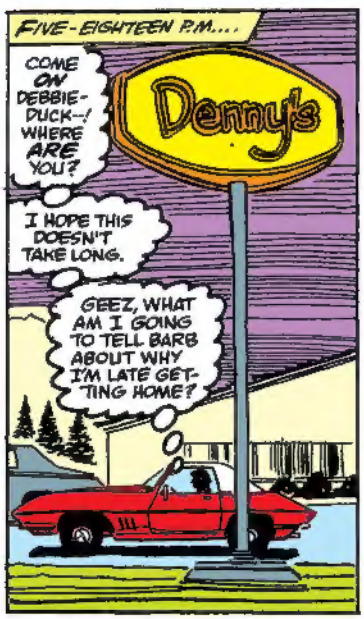

WOW. WHAT A CUSTOMER.
LOOKING AT THE PORSCHE I RECONDITIONED LAST WEEK. SUITS HER.
DANGEROUS CURVES. SLIPPERY WHEN WET, I'LL BET.

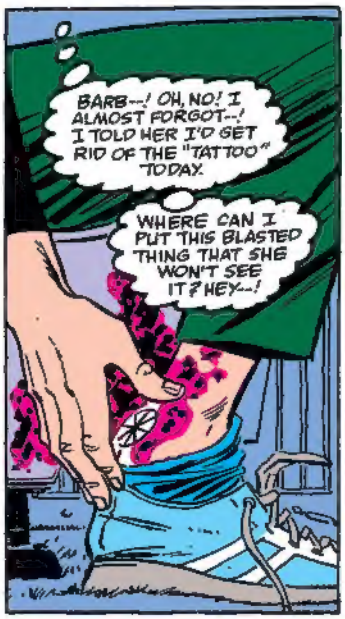

KENNETH! VAHT IS YOU ARE DOING?
VIPING DOWN CARS VAS IS DUSTY, EMIL.
WIPING DOWN DUSTY CARS, MR. VAJDAK.
ZO! ZIS CAN VAIT. MR. ZAYRE VOULD LIKE THAT YOU COME TO HIS OFFICE. IN-MEDIATELY!
AND...
HELLO, MR. ZAYRE. YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
RIGHT. COME ON IN.
YOU SEEM LIKE A REAL SMART BOY, CONNER...
IT'S, UH, CONNELL, MR. ZAYRE.
WHATEVER. BIG JOHN TELLS ME YOU'RE A GOOD BOY, YOU WORK HARD, AND YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT CARS. I LIKE THAT.
McMULLEN ZAYRE
I'M THINKING OF GIVING YOU A SHOT AT SALES NEXT TIME WE HAVE AN OPENING. GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO MAKE SOME REAL MONEY. WHAT DO YOU SAY?
THAT'S... GREAT! THANKS.
YEAH. OKAY, KID, BACK TO WORK. OH, AND WHEN YOU GO BACK DOWN TO THE BASEMENT, TAKE MY CADDY AND GIVE IT A WASH, WILLYA? IT'S IN THE MAIN SHOP GETTING GREASED.
SHORTLY...
"SMART BOY." HUH. THAT LARDBUTT MAKES MY SKIN CRAWL, MORE THAN EMIL DOES.
BUT, WOW, A SALESMAN JOB--! I KNOW I CAN SELL CARS... AND START BRINGING HOME SOME DECENT MONEY... MAKE LIFE A LITTLE EASIER AND BETTER FOR BARB... AND HER KIDS.
OUR KIDS, NOW...SORT OF, I GUESS. PACKAGE DEAL. THEY COME WITH BARB. IF I'M GOING TO BE IN THE FAMILY, I'VE GOT TO CONTRIBUTE MORE.
ELEVATOR
I NEED THAT JOB.
HMPH. I DON'T NEED TO SEE MORE OF LARDBUTT AND EMIL, THOUGH. AND THEY'RE ALWAYS RIDING THE SALES GUYS.
PACKAGE DEAL.
OH, WELL.

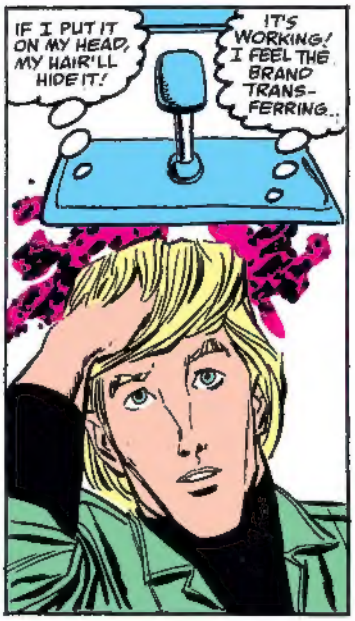

SOON...
... AS MANY AS FOUR MEN STILL TRAPPED INSIDE THE COLLAPSED STRUCTURE. HERE, WITH A LIVE REPORT FROM THE SCENE IS KDKA NEWSMAN, BILL STEINBACH...
HEY, JOHN--! THINK IT'D BE OKAY IF I, UH... LEFT FOR ABOUT AN HOUR OR SO?
NOPE. WHY?

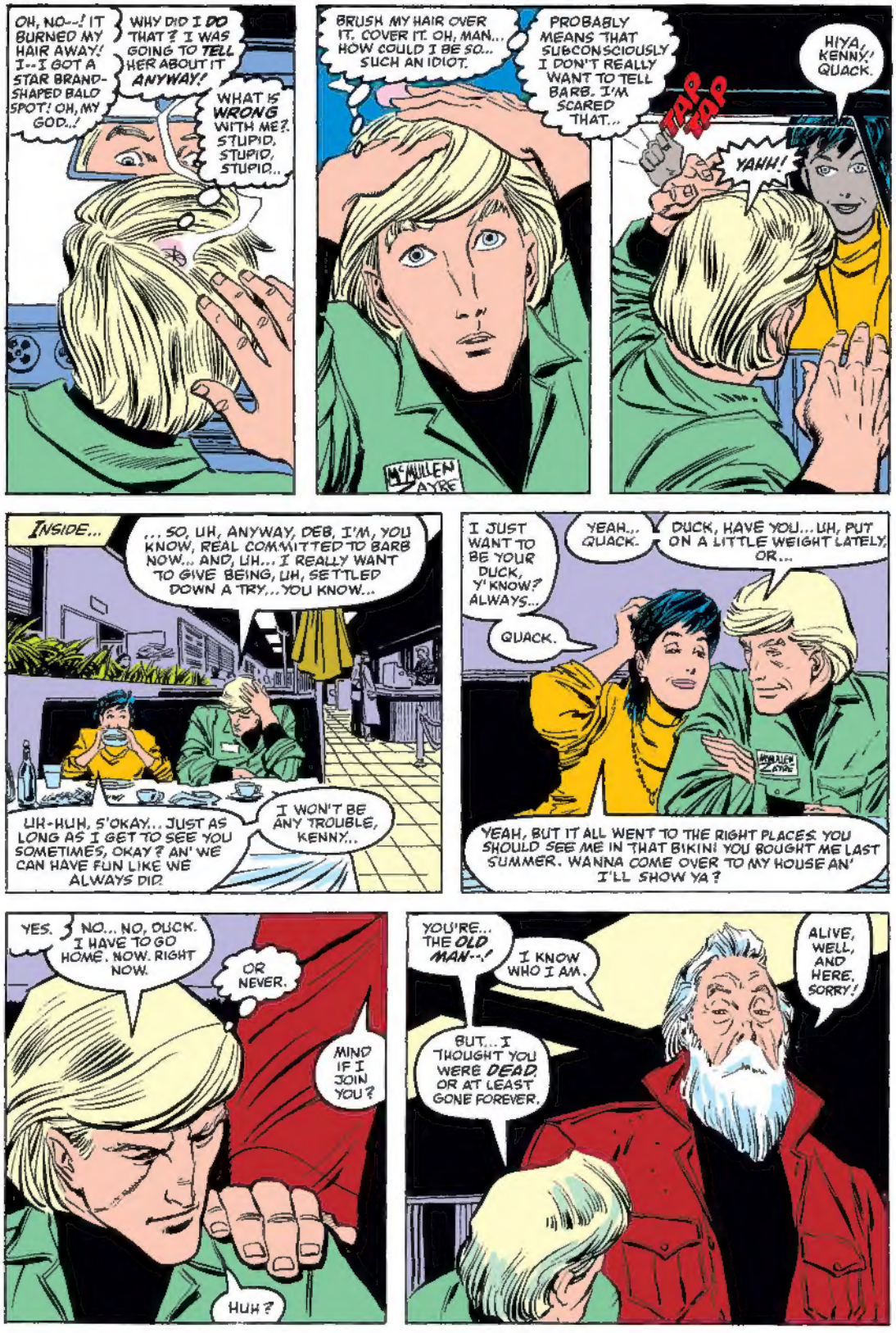
AHH... I PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO HELP THOSE FOUR GUYS ANYWAY--AT LEAST NOT WITHOUT BEING SEEN.
NOTHING, JOHN. JUST WANTED TO GO SEE MY BROKER, YOU KNOW?
McMULLEN ZAYRE

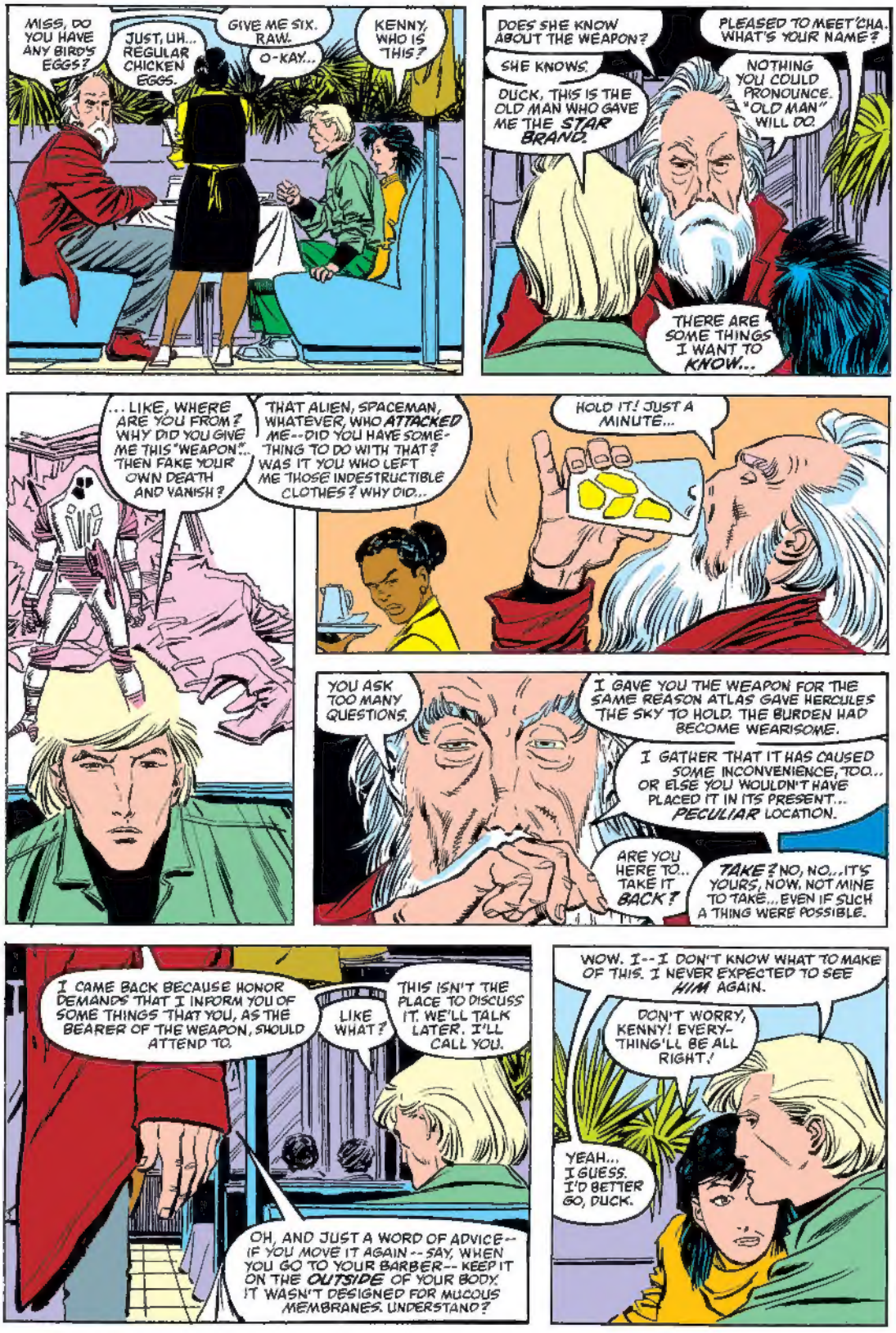

KENNY-BOY, I JUST DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU. I'M DOING MY BEST TO HELP YOU OUT OF THIS CRUMMY BASEMENT AND GET A GOOD JOB WHERE YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY--AND YOU WANT TO TAKE A LITTLE VACATION RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF WASHING MR. ZAYRE'S CAR--!
YOU KNOW, SOMEDAY YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO SETTLE DOWN, SON. HOW YOU GOING TO DO THAT UNLESS YOU START MOVING UP IN THE WORLD?
YOU WANT TO AMOUNT TO SOMETHING, BOY, YOU JUST STAY PUT AND SCRUB. HEAR?
McMULLEN ZAYRE

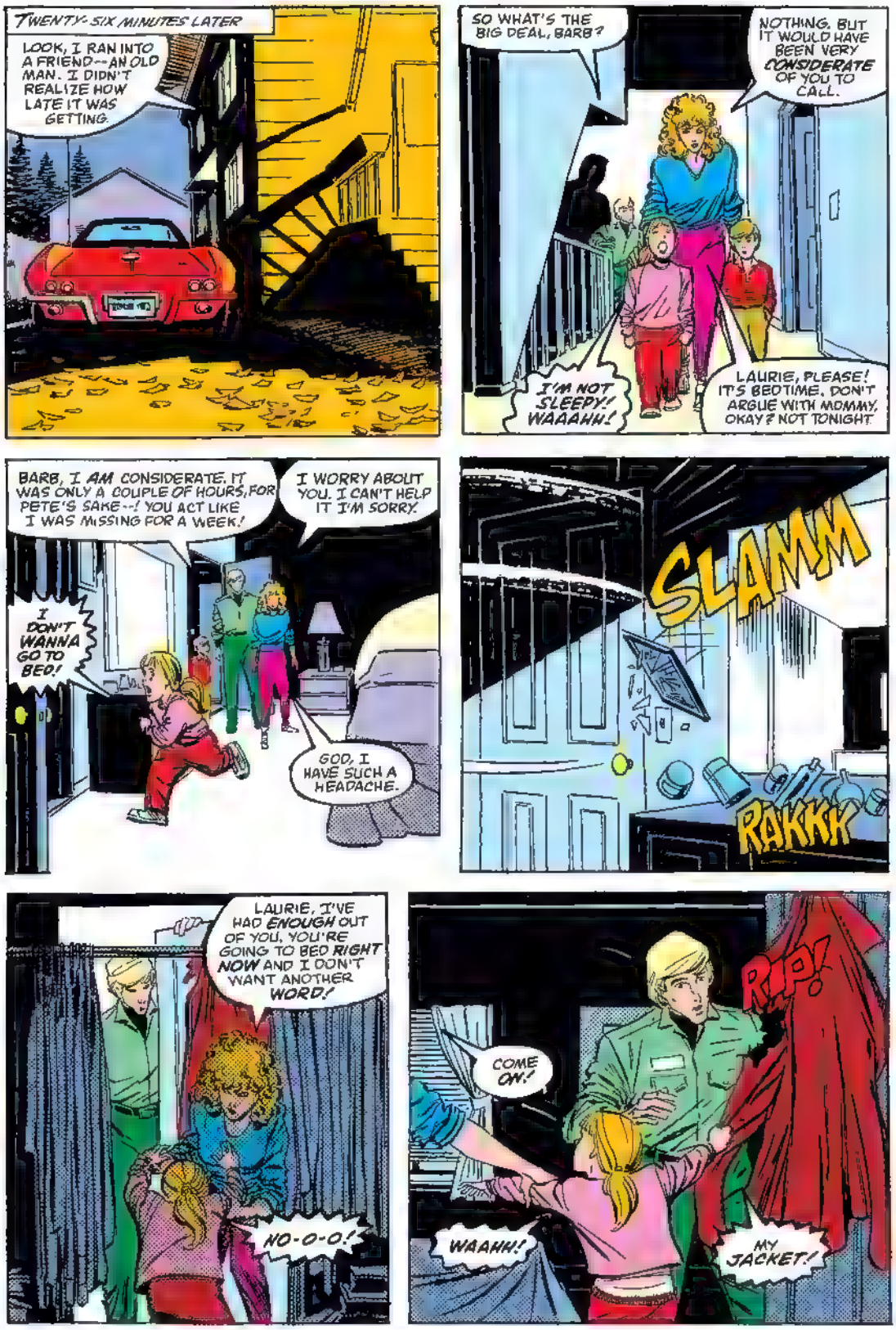

FIVE-EIGHTEEN P.M....
COME ON DEBBIE-DUCK--! WHERE ARE YOU?
Denny's
I HOPE THIS DOESN'T TAKE LONG.
GEEZ, WHAT AM I GOING TO TELL BARB ABOUT WHY I'M LATE GETTING HOME?

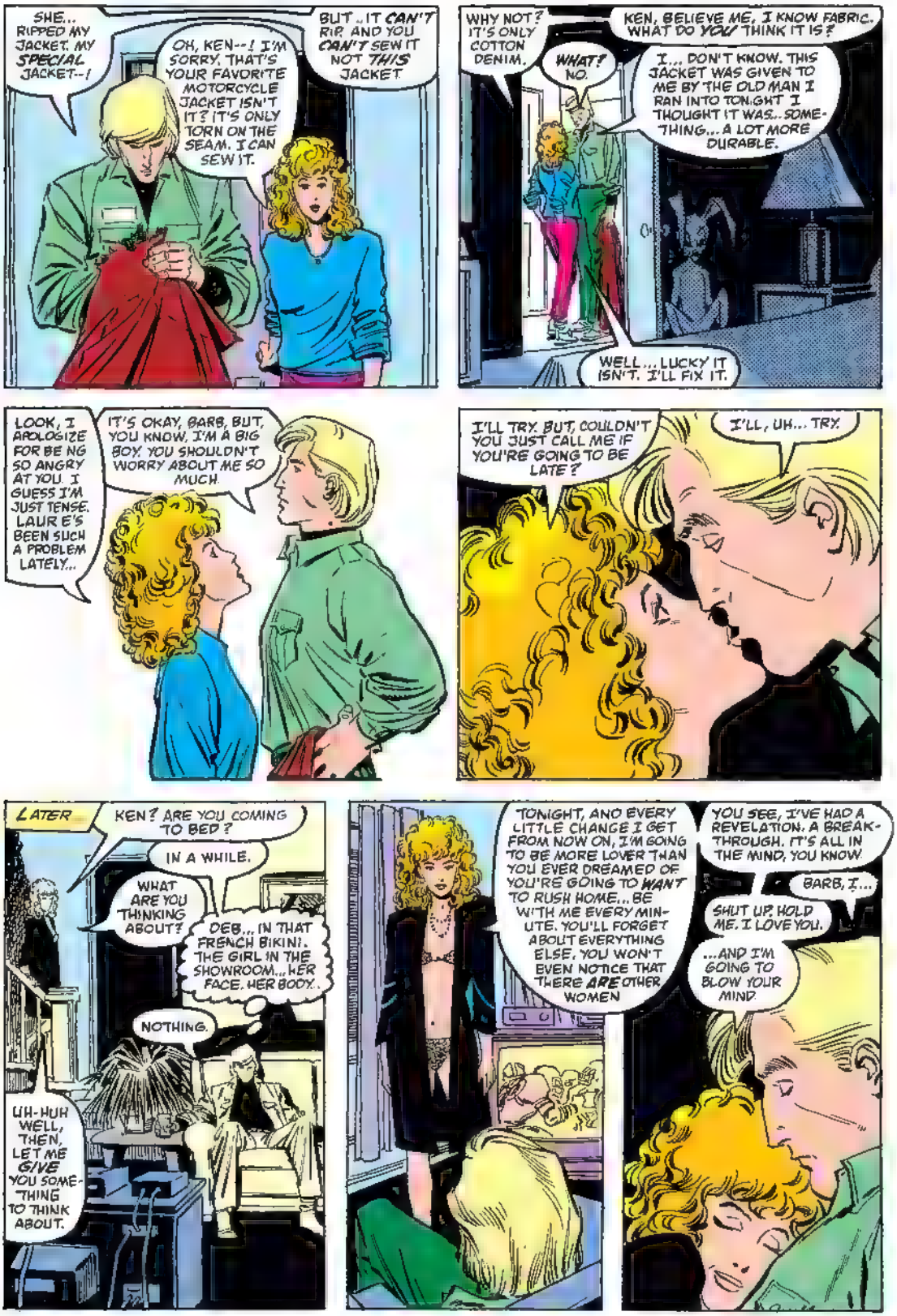

BARB--! OH, NO! I ALMOST FORGOT--! I TOLD HER I'D GET RID OF THE "TATTOO" TODAY.
WHERE CAN I PUT THIS BLASTED THING THAT SHE WON'T SEE IT? HEY--!

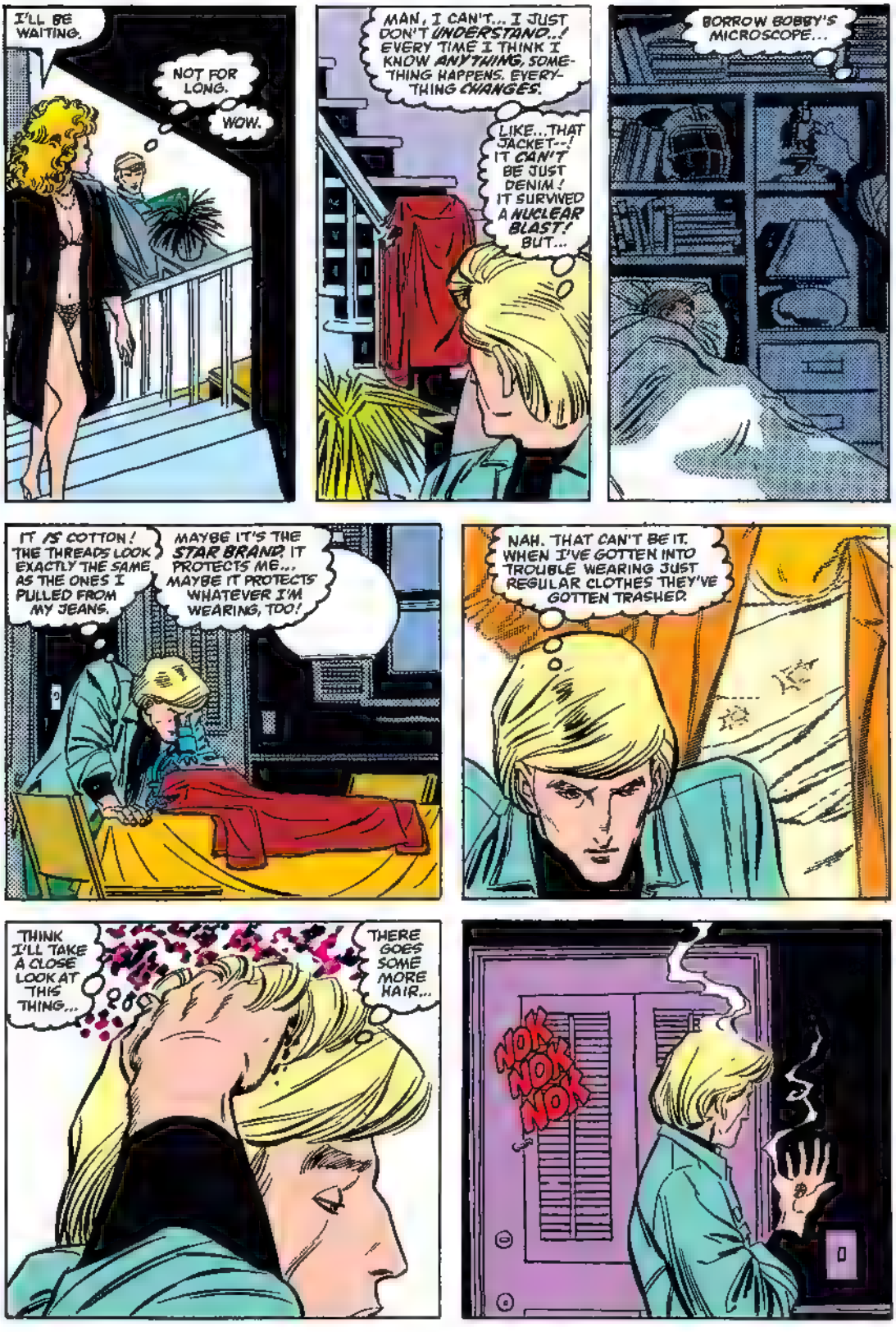

IF I PUT IT ON MY HEAD, MY HAIR'LL HIDE IT!
IT'S WORKING! I FEEL THE BRAND TRANSFERRING...

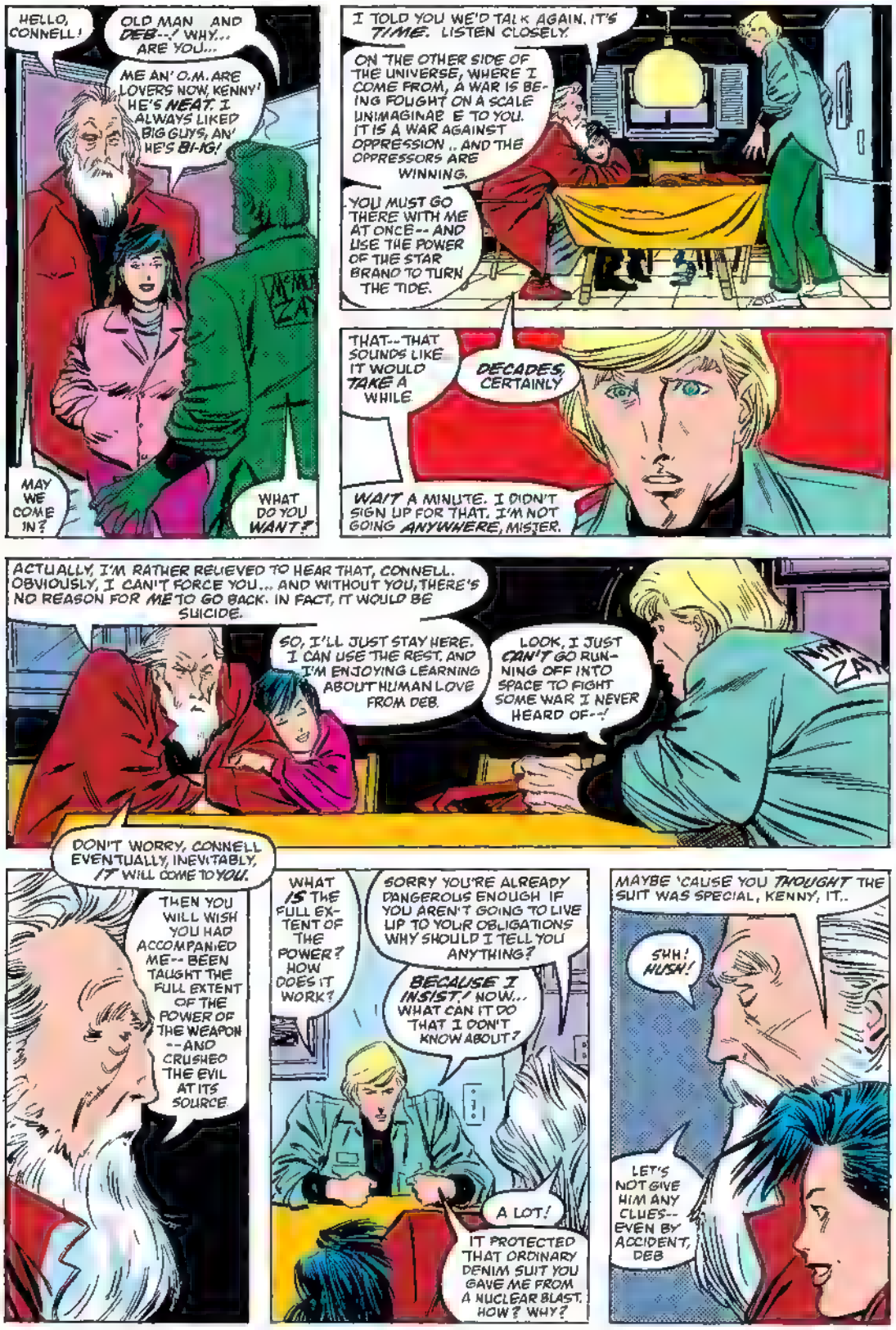

OH, NO--! IT BURNED MY HAIR AWAY! I--I GOT A STAR BRAND-SHAPED BALD SPOT! OH, MY GOD...!
WHY DID I DO THAT? I WAS GOING TO TELL HER ABOUT IT ANYWAY!
WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME? STUPID, STUPID, STUPID...
BRUSH MY HAIR OVER IT. COVER IT. OH, MAN... HOW COULD I BE SO... SUCH AN IDIOT.
PROBABLY MEANS THAT SUBCONSCIOUSLY I DON'T REALLY WANT TO TELL BARB. I'M SCARED THAT...
TAP TAP
YAHH!
HIYA, KENNY! QUACK.
McMULLEN AYRE
INSIDE...
... SO, UH, ANYWAY, DEB, I'M, YOU KNOW, REAL COMMITTED TO BARB NOW... AND, UH... I REALLY WANT TO GIVE BEING, UH, SETTLED DOWN A TRY... YOU KNOW...
UH-HUH. S'OKAY... JUST AS LONG AS I GET TO SEE YOU SOMETIMES, OKAY? AN' WE CAN HAVE FUN LIKE WE ALWAYS DID.
I WON'T BE ANY TROUBLE, KENNY...
I JUST WANT TO BE YOUR DUCK, Y' KNOW? ALWAYS...
QUACK.
YEAH... QUACK.
DUCK, HAVE YOU... UH, PUT ON A LITTLE WEIGHT LATELY, OR...
YEAH, BUT IT ALL WENT TO THE RIGHT PLACES. YOU SHOULD SEE ME IN THAT BIKINI YOU BOUGHT ME LAST SUMMER. WANNA COME OVER TO MY HOUSE AN' I'LL SHOW YA?
YES.
NO... NO, DUCK. I HAVE TO GO HOME. NOW. RIGHT NOW.
OR NEVER.
MIND IF I JOIN YOU?
HUH?
YOU'RE... THE OLD MAN--!
I KNOW WHO I AM.
BUT... I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD, OR AT LEAST GONE FOREVER.
ALIVE, WELL, AND HERE, SORRY!

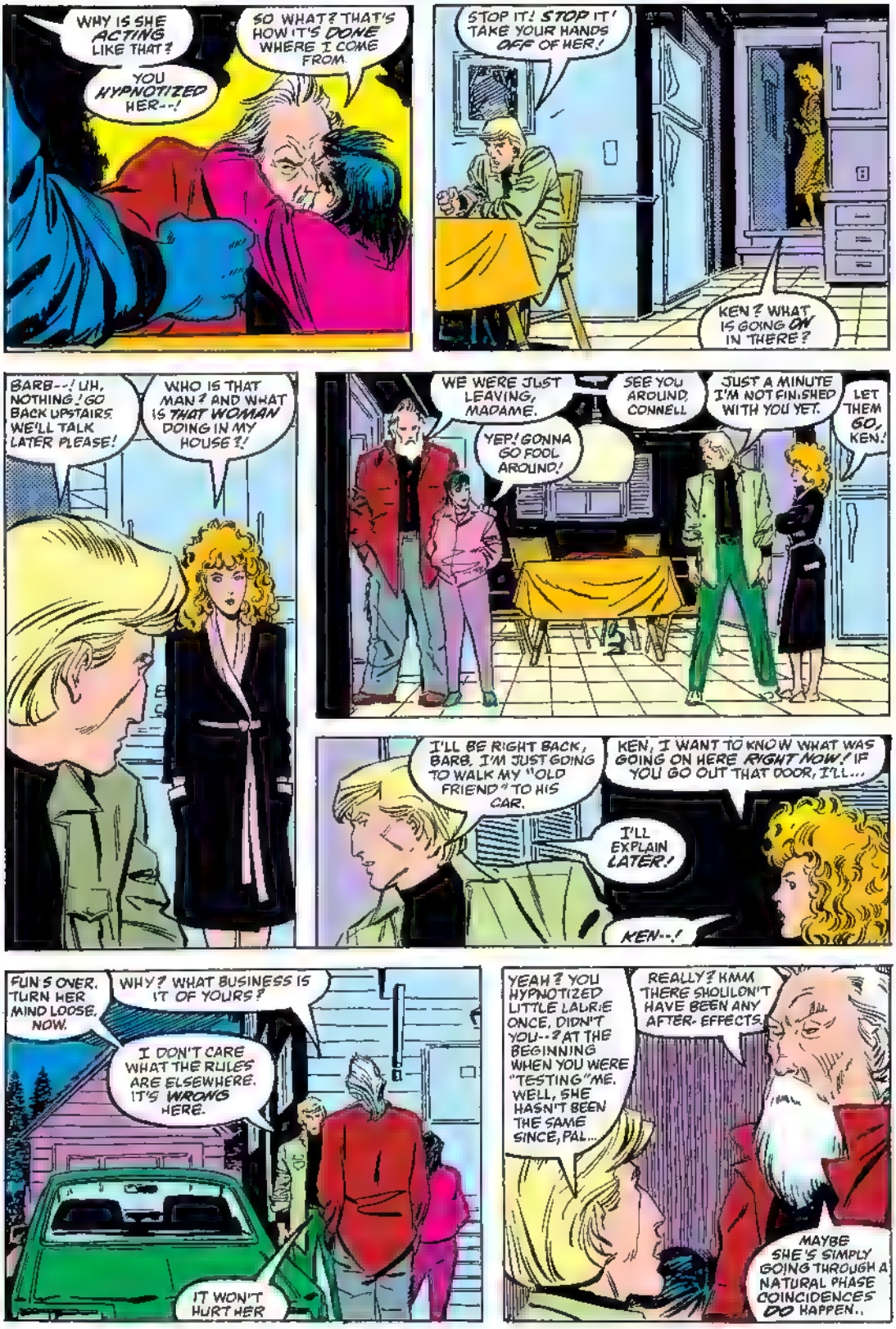

MISS, DO YOU HAVE ANY BIRD'S EGGS?
JUST, UH... REGULAR CHICKEN EGGS.
GIVE ME SIX. RAW.
O-KAY...
KENNY, WHO IS THIS?
DOES SHE KNOW ABOUT THE WEAPON?
SHE KNOWS.
DUCK, THIS IS THE OLD MAN WHO GAVE ME THE STAR BRAND.
PLEASED TO MEET'CHA. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
NOTHING YOU COULD PRONOUNCE. "OLD MAN" WILL DO.
THERE ARE SOME THINGS I WANT TO KNOW...
... LIKE, WHERE ARE YOU FROM? WHY DID YOU GIVE ME THIS "WEAPON"... THEN FAKE YOUR OWN DEATH AND VANISH?
THAT ALIEN, SPACEMAN, WHATEVER, WHO ATTACKED ME--DID YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT? WAS IT YOU WHO LEFT ME THOSE INDESTRUCTIBLE CLOTHES? WHY DID...
HOLD IT! JUST A MINUTE...
YOU ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS.
I GAVE YOU THE WEAPON FOR THE SAME REASON ATLAS GAVE HERCULES THE SKY TO HOLD. THE BURDEN HAD BECOME WEARISOME.
I GATHER THAT IT HAS CAUSED SOME INCONVENIENCE, TOO... OR ELSE YOU WOULDN'T HAVE PLACED IT IN ITS PRESENT... PECULIAR LOCATION.
ARE YOU HERE TO... TAKE IT BACK?
TAKE? NO, NO... IT'S YOURS, NOW. NOT MINE TO TAKE... EVEN IF SUCH A THING WERE POSSIBLE.
I CAME BACK BECAUSE HONOR DEMANDS THAT I INFORM YOU OF SOME THINGS THAT YOU, AS THE BEARER OF THE WEAPON, SHOULD ATTEND TO.
LIKE WHAT?
THIS ISN'T THE PLACE TO DISCUSS IT. WE'LL TALK LATER. I'LL CALL YOU.
OH, AND JUST A WORD OF ADVICE-- IF YOU MOVE IT AGAIN -- SAY, WHEN YOU GO TO YOUR BARBER-- KEEP IT ON THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR BODY. IT WASN'T DESIGNED FOR MUCOUS MEMBRANES. UNDERSTAND?
WOW. I-- I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF THIS. I NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE HIM AGAIN.
DON'T WORRY, KENNY! EVERYTHING'LL BE ALL RIGHT!
YEAH... I GUESS. I'D BETTER GO, DUCK.

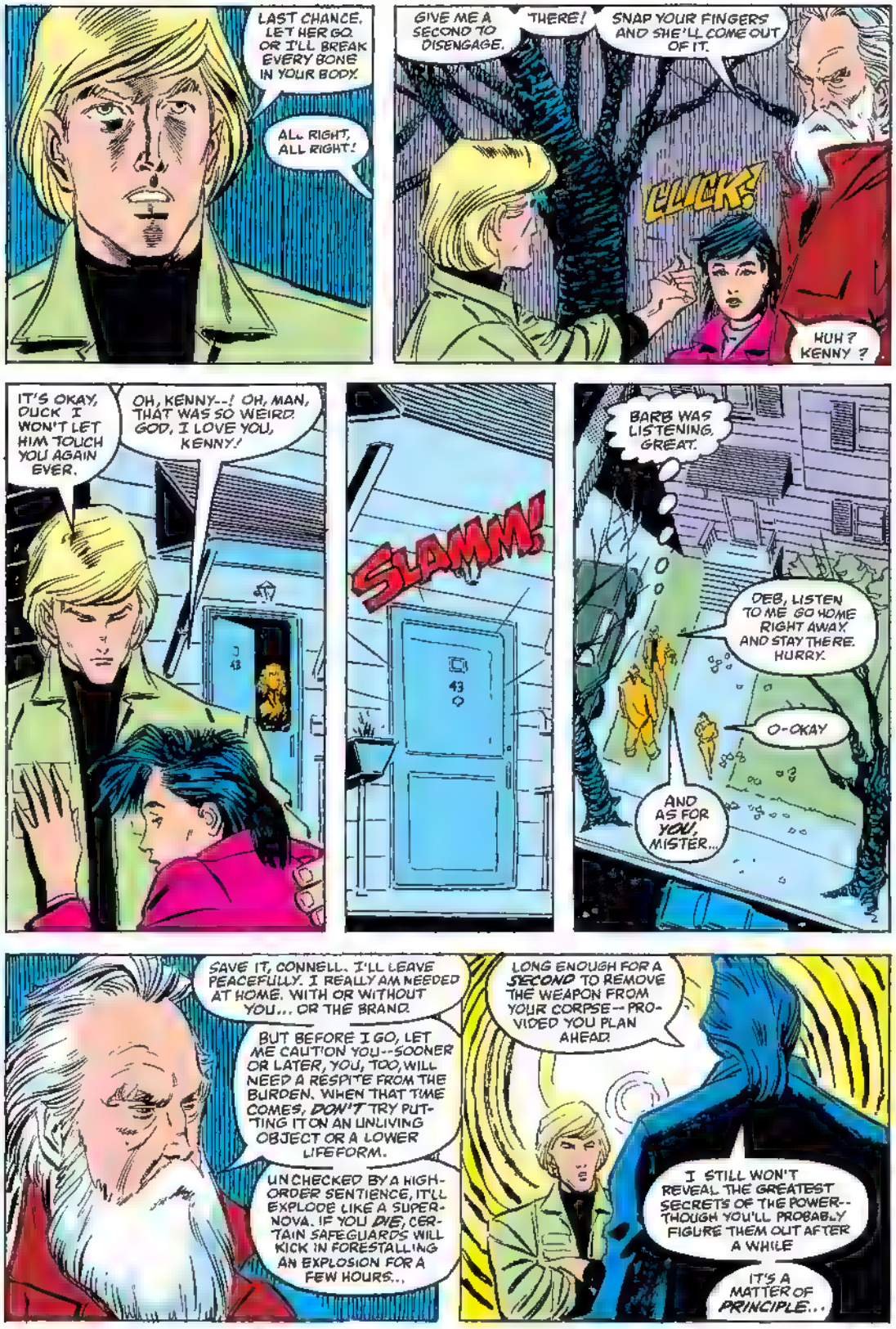

TWENTY-SIX MINUTES LATER
LOOK, I RAN INTO A FRIEND--AN OLD MAN. I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW LATE IT WAS GETTING.
SO WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL, BARB?
NOTHING, BUT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY CONSIDERATE OF YOU TO CALL.
I'M NOT SLEEPY! WAAAHH!
LAURIE, PLEASE! IT'S BEDTIME. DON'T ARGUE WITH MOMMY, OKAY? NOT TONIGHT.
BARB, I AM CONSIDERATE. IT WAS ONLY A COUPLE OF HOURS, FOR PETE'S SAKE--! YOU ACT LIKE I WAS MISSING FOR A WEEK!
I WORRY ABOUT YOU. I CAN'T HELP IT I'M SORRY.
I DON'T WANNA GO TO BED!
GOD, I HAVE SUCH A HEADACHE.
SLAMM
RAKKK
LAURIE, I'VE HAD ENOUGH OUT OF YOU. YOU'RE GOING TO BED RIGHT NOW AND I DON'T WANT ANOTHER WORD!
NO-O-O!
RIP!
COME ON!
WAAHH!
MY JACKET!

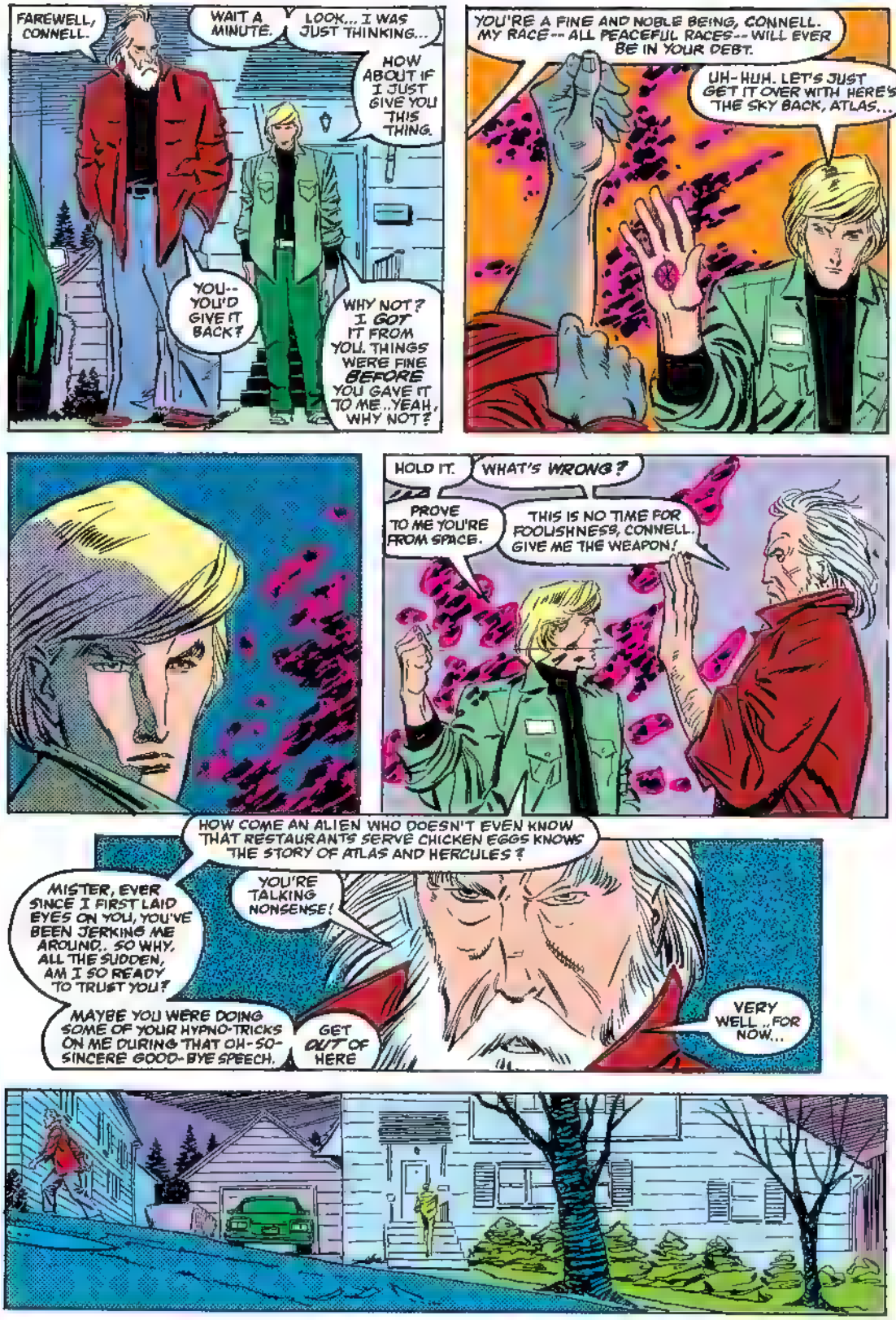

SHE... RIPPED MY JACKET. MY SPECIAL JACKET--!
OH, KEN--! I'M SORRY. THAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MOTORCYCLE JACKET ISN'T IT? IT'S ONLY TORN ON THE SEAM. I CAN SEW IT.
BUT.. IT CAN'T RIP. AND YOU CAN'T SEW IT NOT THIS JACKET.
WHY NOT? IT'S ONLY COTTON DENIM.
WHAT? NO.
KEN, BELIEVE ME, I KNOW FABRIC. WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS?
I... DON'T KNOW. THIS JACKET WAS GIVEN TO ME BY THE OLD MAN I RAN INTO TONIGHT I THOUGHT IT WAS.. SOMETHING... A LOT MORE DURABLE.
WELL... LUCKY IT ISN'T. I'LL FIX IT.
LOOK, I APOLOGIZE FOR BE NG SO ANGRY AT YOU. I GUESS I'M JUST TENSE. LAUR E'S BEEN SUCH A PROBLEM LATELY...
IT'S OKAY, BARB, BUT, YOU KNOW, I'M A BIG BOY. YOU SHOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT ME SO MUCH.
I'LL TRY. BUT, COULDN'T YOU JUST CALL ME IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE?
I'LL, UH... TRY.
LATER
KEN? ARE YOU COMING TO BED?
IN A WHILE.
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?
DEB... IN THAT FRENCH BIKINI. THE GIRL IN THE SHOWROOM... HER FACE. HER BODY.
NOTHING.
UH-HUH WELL, THEN, LET ME GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.
TONIGHT, AND EVERY LITTLE CHANGE I GET FROM NOW ON, I'M GOING TO BE MORE LOVER THAN YOU EVER DREAMED OF YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO RUSH HOME... BE WITH ME EVERY MINUTE. YOU'LL FORGET ABOUT EVERYTHING ELSE, YOU WON'T EVEN NOTICE THAT THERE ARE OTHER WOMEN
YOU SEE, I'VE HAD A REVELATION. A BREAKTHROUGH. IT'S ALL IN THE MIND, YOU KNOW
BARB, I...
SHUT UP, HOLD ME. I LOVE YOU.
...AND I'M GOING TO BLOW YOUR MIND

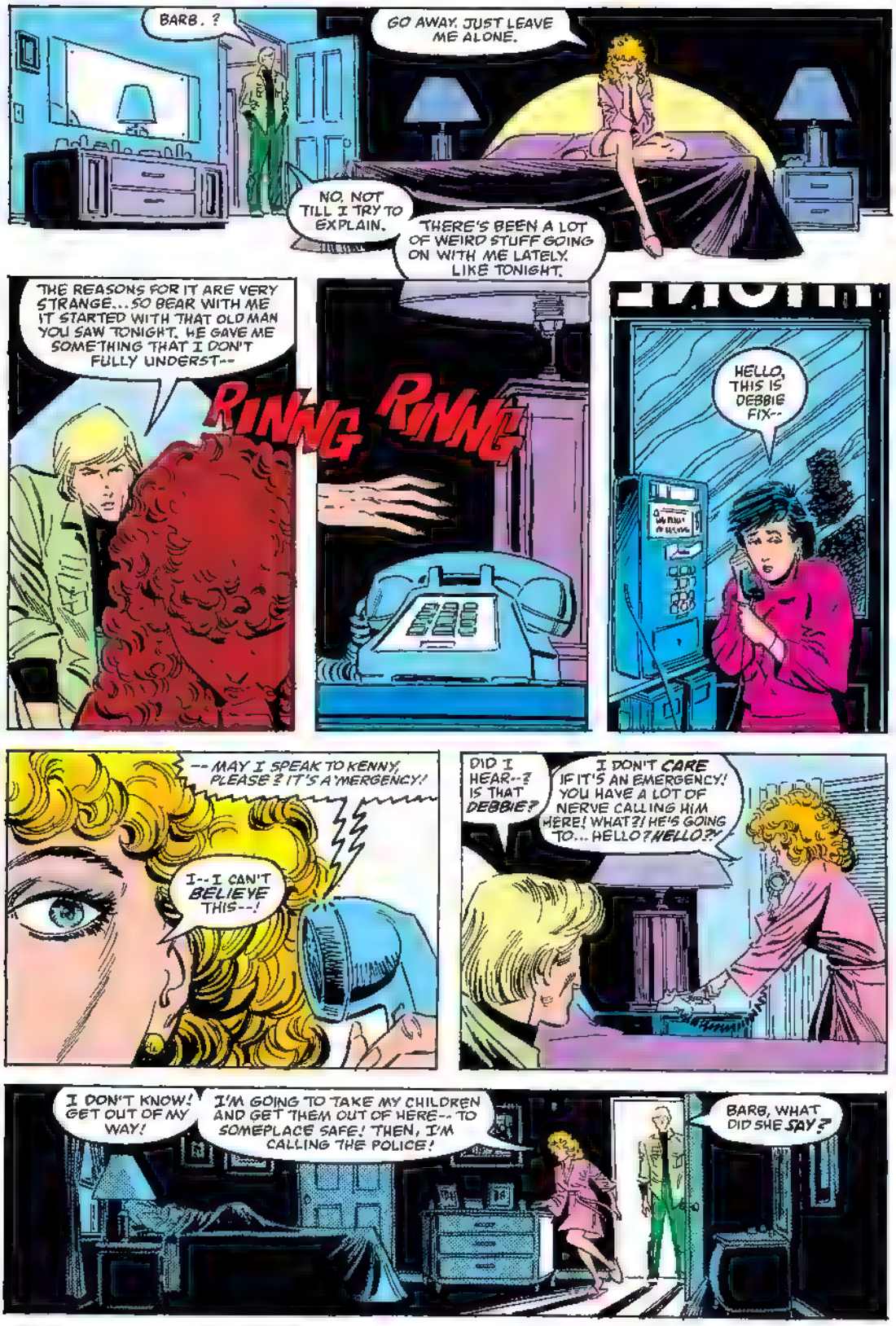

I'LL BE WAITING.
NOT FOR LONG.
WOW.
MAN, I CAN'T... I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND..! EVERY TIME I THINK I KNOW ANYTHING, SOMETHING HAPPENS. EVERYTHING CHANGES.
LIKE...THAT JACKET--! IT CAN'T BE JUST DENIM! IT SURVIVED A NUCLEAR BLAST! BUT...
BORROW BOBBY'S MICROSCOPE...
IT IS COTTON! THE THREADS LOOK EXACTLY THE SAME AS THE ONES I PULLED FROM MY JEANS.
MAYBE IT'S THE STAR BRAND! IT PROTECTS ME... MAYBE IT PROTECTS WHATEVER I'M WEARING, TOO!
NAH. THAT CAN'T BE IT. WHEN I'VE GOTTEN INTO TROUBLE WEARING JUST REGULAR CLOTHES THEY'VE GOTTEN TRASHED.
THINK I'LL TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THIS THING...
THERE GOES SOME MORE HAIR...
NOK NOK NOK

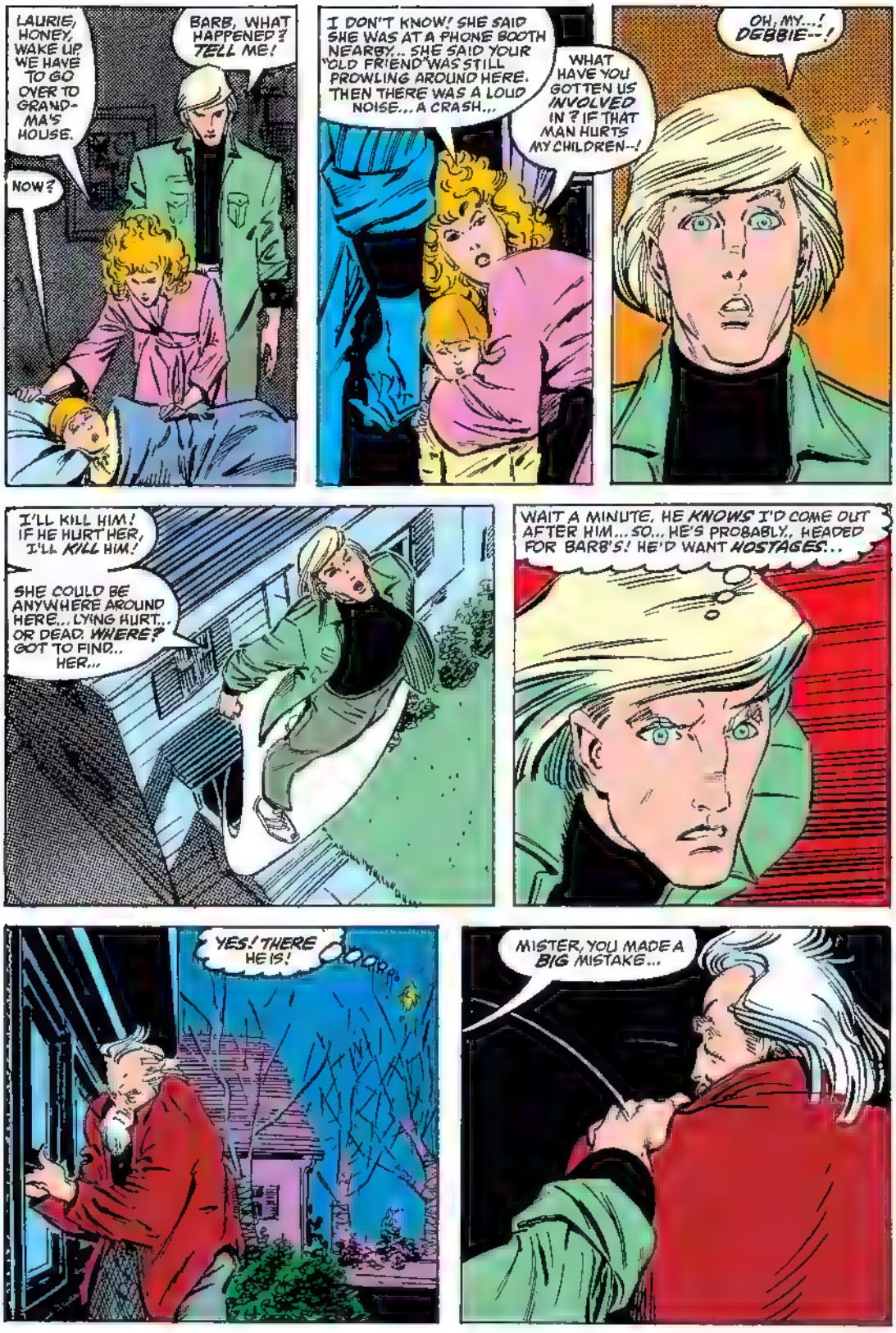

HELLO, CONNELL!
OLD MAN AND DEB--! WHY... ARE YOU...
ME AN' O.M. ARE LOVERS NOW, KENNY! HE'S NEAT. I ALWAYS LIKED BIG GUYS, AN' HE'S BI-IG!
MAY WE COME IN?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I TOLD YOU WE'D TALK AGAIN. IT'S TIME. LISTEN CLOSELY.
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE, WHERE I COME FROM, A WAR IS BEING FOUGHT ON A SCALE UNIMAGINABLE TO YOU. IT IS A WAR AGAINST OPPRESSION .. AND THE OPPRESSORS ARE WINNING.
YOU MUST GO THERE WITH ME AT ONCE-- AND USE THE POWER OF THE STAR BRAND TO TURN THE TIDE.
THAT--THAT SOUNDS LIKE IT WOULD TAKE A WHILE.
DECADES, CERTAINLY
WAIT A MINUTE. I DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR THAT. I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE, MISTER.
ACTUALLY, I'M RATHER RELIEVED TO HEAR THAT, CONNELL. OBVIOUSLY, I CAN'T FORCE YOU... AND WITHOUT YOU, THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO GO BACK. IN FACT, IT WOULD BE SUICIDE.
SO, I'LL JUST STAY HERE. I CAN USE THE REST. AND I'M ENJOYING LEARNING ABOUT HUMAN LOVE FROM DEB.
LOOK, I JUST CAN'T GO RUNNING OFF INTO SPACE TO FIGHT SOME WAR I NEVER HEARD OF--!
DON'T WORRY, CONNELL. EVENTUALLY, INEVITABLY, IT WILL COME TO YOU.
THEN YOU WILL WISH YOU HAD ACCOMPANIED ME-- BEEN TAUGHT THE FULL EXTENT OF THE POWER OF THE WEAPON --AND CRUSHED THE EVIL AT ITS SOURCE.
WHAT IS THE FULL EXTENT OF THE POWER? HOW DOES IT WORK?
SORRY YOU'RE ALREADY DANGEROUS ENOUGH IF YOU AREN'T GOING TO LIVE UP TO YOUR OBLIGATIONS WHY SHOULD I TELL YOU ANYTHING?
BECAUSE I INSIST.! NOW... WHAT CAN IT DO THAT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT?
A LOT!
IT PROTECTED THAT ORDINARY DENIM SUIT YOU GAVE ME FROM A NUCLEAR BLAST. HOW? WHY?
MAYBE 'CAUSE YOU THOUGHT THE SUIT WAS SPECIAL, KENNY, IT..
SHH! HUSH!
LET'S NOT GIVE HIM ANY CLUES-- EVEN BY ACCIDENT, DEB

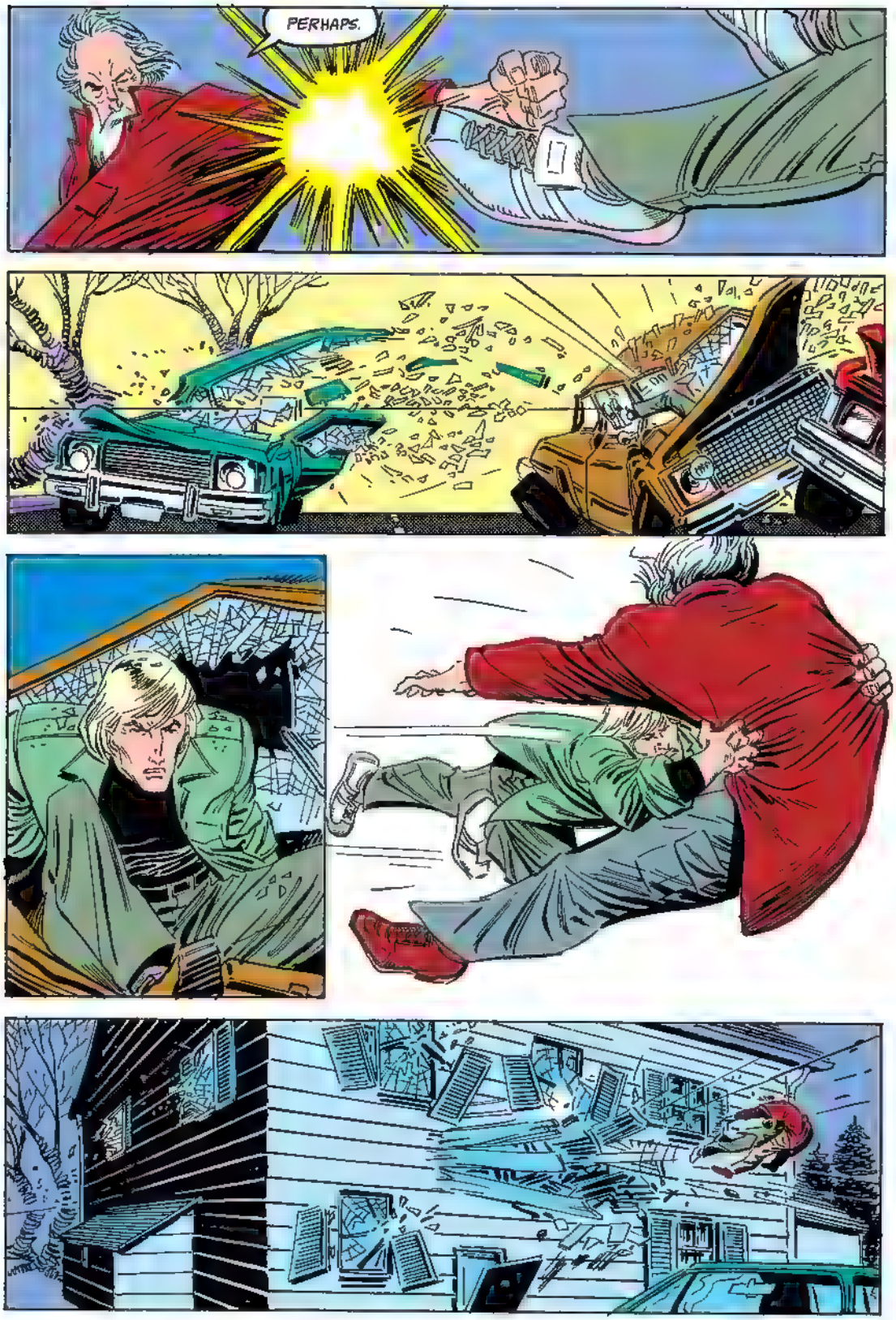

WHY IS SHE ACTING LIKE THAT?
SO WHAT? THAT'S HOW IT'S DONE WHERE I COME FROM.
YOU HYPNOTIZED HER--!
STOP IT! STOP IT! TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF OF HER!
KEN? WHAT IS GOING ON IN THERE?
BARB--! UH, NOTHING! GO BACK UPSTAIRS. WE'LL TALK LATER PLEASE!
WHO IS THAT MAN? AND WHAT IS THAT WOMAN DOING IN MY HOUSE?!
WE WERE JUST LEAVING, MADAME.
SEE YOU AROUND, CONNELL
JUST A MINUTE I'M NOT FINISHED WITH YOU YET.
LET THEM GO, KEN!
YEP! GONNA GO FOOL AROUND!
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK, BARB. I'M JUST GOING TO WALK MY "OLD FRIEND" TO HIS CAR.
KEN, I WANT TO KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE RIGHT NOW! IF YOU GO OUT THAT DOOR, I'LL...
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER!
KEN--!
FUN'S OVER. TURN HER MIND LOOSE. NOW.
WHY? WHAT BUSINESS IS IT OF YOURS?
I DON'T CARE WHAT THE RULES ARE ELSEWHERE. IT'S WRONG HERE.
IT WON'T HURT HER
YEAH? YOU HYPNOTIZED LITTLE LAURIE ONCE, DIDN'T YOU--? AT THE BEGINNING WHEN YOU WERE "TESTING" ME. WELL, SHE HASN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE, PAL...
REALLY? HMM THERE SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANY AFTER-EFFECTS.
MAYBE SHE'S SIMPLY GOING THROUGH A NATURAL PHASE COINCIDENCES DO HAPPEN..

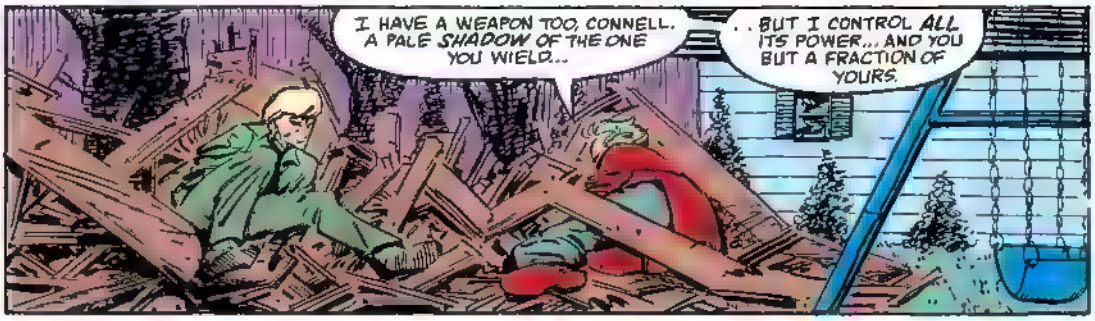

LAST CHANCE. LET HER GO, OR I'LL BREAK EVERY BONE IN YOUR BODY.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT!
GIVE ME A SECOND TO DISENGAGE.
THERE!
SNAP YOUR FINGERS AND SHE'LL COME OUT OF IT.
CLICK!
HUH? KENNY?
IT'S OKAY, DUCK I WON'T LET HIM TOUCH YOU AGAIN EVER.
OH, KENNY--! OH, MAN, THAT WAS SO WEIRD. GOD, I LOVE YOU, KENNY!
SLAMM!
BARB WAS LISTENING, GREAT.
DEB, LISTEN TO ME GO HOME RIGHT AWAY AND STAY THERE. HURRY.
O-OKAY
AND AS FOR YOU, MISTER...
SAVE IT, CONNELL. I'LL LEAVE PEACEFULLY. I REALLY AM NEEDED AT HOME. WITH OR WITHOUT YOU... OR THE BRAND.
BUT BEFORE I GO, LET ME CAUTION YOU--SOONER OR LATER, YOU, TOO, WILL NEED A RESPITE FROM THE BURDEN. WHEN THAT TIME COMES, DON'T TRY PUTTING IT ON AN UNLIVING OBJECT OR A LOWER LIFEFORM.
UNCHECKED BY A HIGH-ORDER SENTIENCE, IT'LL EXPLODE LIKE A SUPERNOVA. IF YOU DIE, CERTAIN SAFEGUARDS WILL KICK IN FORESTALLING AN EXPLOSION FOR A FEW HOURS...
LONG ENOUGH FOR A SECOND TO REMOVE THE WEAPON FROM YOUR CORPSE -- PROVIDED YOU PLAN AHEAD.
I STILL WON'T REVEAL THE GREATEST SECRETS OF THE POWER -- THOUGH YOU'LL PROBABLY FIGURE THEM OUT AFTER A WHILE
IT'S A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE...

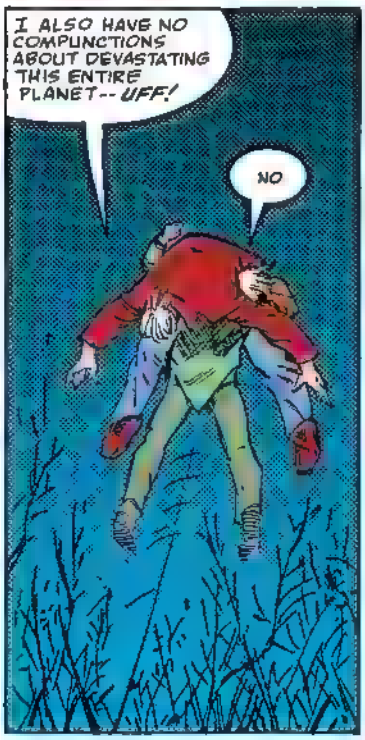

FAREWELL, CONNELL.
WAIT A MINUTE.
LOOK... I WAS JUST THINKING...
HOW ABOUT IF I JUST GIVE YOU THIS THING.
YOU-- YOU'D GIVE IT BACK?
WHY NOT? I GOT IT FROM YOU. THINGS WERE FINE BEFORE YOU GAVE IT TO ME..YEAH, WHY NOT?
YOU'RE A FINE AND NOBLE BEING, CONNELL. MY RACE-- ALL PEACEFUL RACES-- WILL EVER BE IN YOUR DEBT.
UH-HUH. LET'S JUST GET IT OVER WITH HERE'S THE SKY BACK, ATLAS...
HOLD IT.
WHAT'S WRONG?
PROVE TO ME YOU'RE FROM SPACE.
THIS IS NO TIME FOR FOOLISHNESS, CONNELL. GIVE ME THE WEAPON!
HOW COME AN ALIEN WHO DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THAT RESTAURANTS SERVE CHICKEN EGGS KNOWS THE STORY OF ATLAS AND HERCULES?
YOU'RE TALKING NONSENSE!
MISTER, EVER SINCE I FIRST LAID EYES ON YOU, YOU'VE BEEN JERKING ME AROUND.. SO WHY, ALL THE SUDDEN, AM I SO READY TO TRUST YOU?
MAYBE YOU WERE DOING SOME OF YOUR HYPNO-TRICKS ON ME DURING THAT OH-SO-SINCERE GOOD-BYE SPEECH.
GET OUT OF HERE
VERY WELL ..FOR NOW...


BARB. ?
GO AWAY. JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
NO. NOT TILL I TRY TO EXPLAIN.
THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF WEIRD STUFF GOING ON WITH ME LATELY. LIKE TONIGHT.
THE REASONS FOR IT ARE VERY STRANGE... SO BEAR WITH ME IT STARTED WITH THAT OLD MAN YOU SAW TONIGHT. HE GAVE ME SOMETHING THAT I DON'T FULLY UNDERST--
RINNG RINNG
HELLO, THIS IS DEBBIE FIX--
-- MAY I SPEAK TO KENNY, PLEASE? IT'S A 'MERGENCY!
I--I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS--!
DID I HEAR--? IS THAT DEBBIE?
I DON'T CARE IF IT'S AN EMERGENCY! YOU HAVE A LOT OF NERVE CALLING HIM HERE! WHAT?! HE'S GOING TO... HELLO? HELLO?!
I DON'T KNOW! GET OUT OF MY WAY!
I'M GOING TO TAKE MY CHILDREN AND GET THEM OUT OF HERE-- TO SOMEPLACE SAFE! THEN, I'M CALLING THE POLICE!
BARB, WHAT DID SHE SAY?

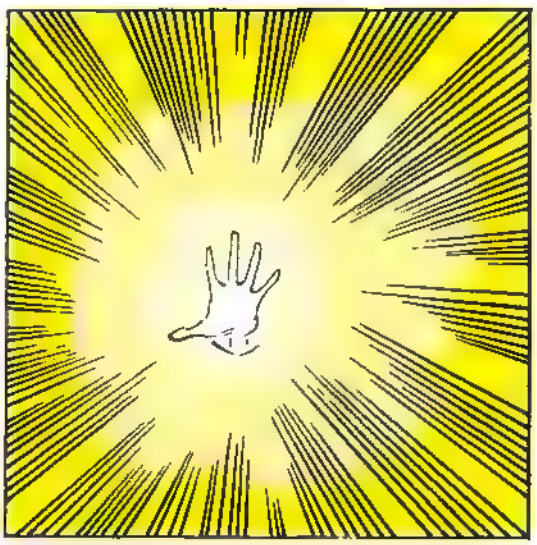

LAURIE, HONEY, WAKE UP. WE HAVE TO GO OVER TO GRANDMA'S HOUSE.
NOW?
BARB, WHAT HAPPENED? TELL ME!
I DON'T KNOW! SHE SAID SHE WAS AT A PHONE BOOTH NEARBY... SHE SAID YOUR "OLD FRIEND" WAS STILL PROWLING AROUND HERE. THEN THERE WAS A LOUD NOISE... A CRASH...
WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN US INVOLVED IN? IF THAT MAN HURTS MY CHILDREN--!
OH, MY...! DEBBIE--!
I'LL KILL HIM! IF HE HURT HER, I'LL KILL HIM!
SHE COULD BE ANYWHERE AROUND HERE... LYING HURT... OR DEAD. WHERE? GOT TO FIND... HER...
WAIT A MINUTE. HE KNOWS I'D COME OUT AFTER HIM... SO... HE'S PROBABLY... HEADED FOR BARB'S! HE'D WANT HOSTAGES...
YES! THERE HE IS!
MISTER, YOU MADE A BIG MISTAKE...

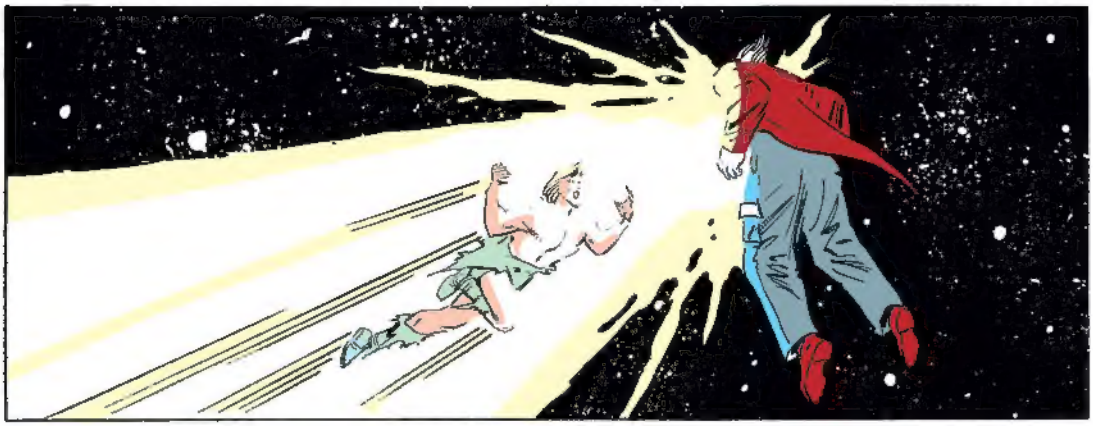

PERHAPS.

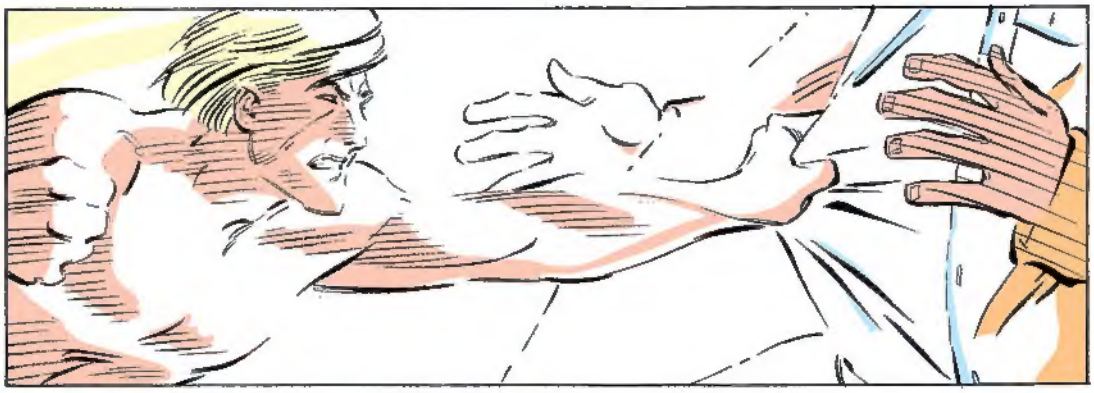

I HAVE A WEAPON TOO, CONNELL. A PALE SHADOW OF THE ONE YOU WIELD...
...BUT I CONTROL ALL ITS POWER... AND YOU BUT A FRACTION OF YOURS.

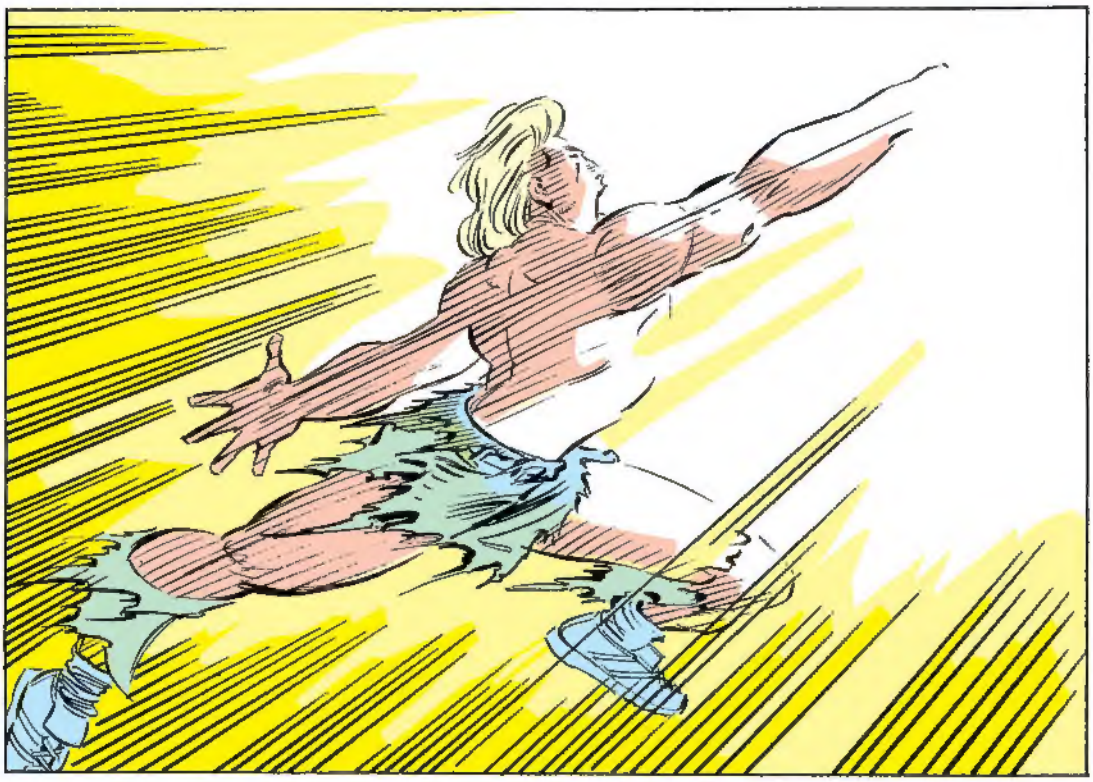

I ALSO HAVE NO COMPUNCTIONS ABOUT DEVASTATING THIS ENTIRE PLANET-- UFF!
NO

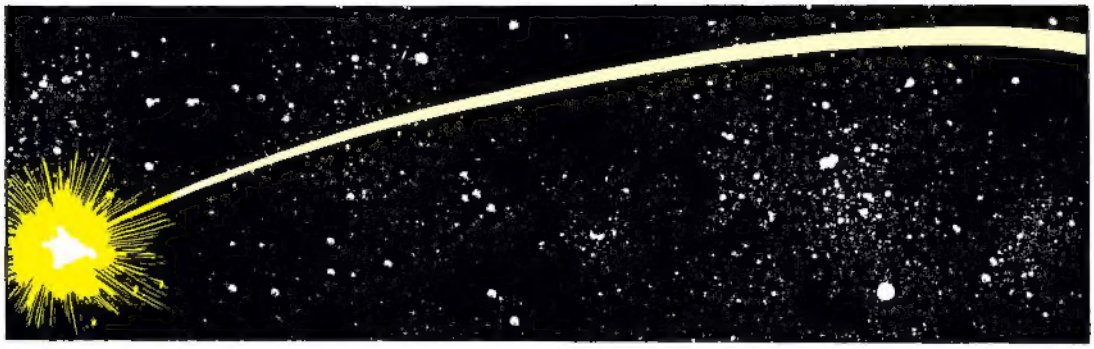
YOU'RE NOT HURTING ANYBODY ELSE

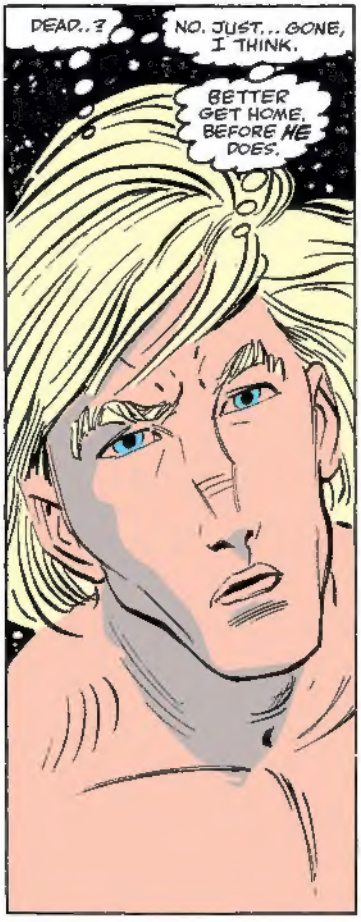


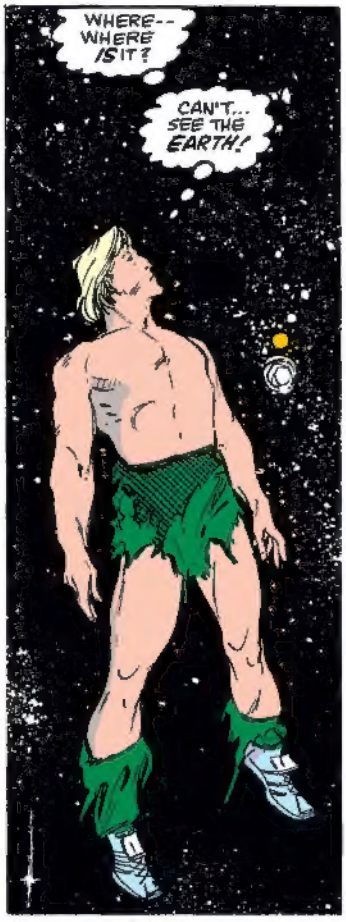









DEAD..?
NO. JUST... GONE, I THINK.
BETTER GET HOME, BEFORE HE DOES.


WHERE-- WHERE IS IT?
CAN'T... SEE THE EARTH!

WHICH WAY?! WHICH WAY IS IT?!
OH... GOD...

NEXT: "A COWARD DIES..."